

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra



The Rock Fire broke out on Monday between Big Pine and Independence along Hwy. 395, burning thousands of acres of land. For more, see p. 2.

Saturday, July 25, 2026

FREE

Vol. 24, No. 30

HUNGRY?

It's more expensive at the grocery store, but where else you gonna go?

By Fisher

If your grocery bill has crept up recently, you're not imagining it.

Grocery prices are up 2.7% over the past year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, with another 0.2% increase in June.

In Mammoth, where residents have two full-service grocery options, those rising prices have seemingly shaped where people shop and what they buy.

But that grocery landscape may soon change. Rumors have circulated among business owners that Trader Joe's could fill the former Rite-Aid location, adding a new option for shoppers in a community that has long had limited grocery competition. The retailer has not confirmed plans to open a Mammoth location — but more on that later.

For now, inflation has created an unexpected opportunity for one local retailer.

Mammoth Lakes Grocery Outlet store manager Robert Puig and his wife are in their fourth year operating the store.

When asked how inflation

has affected business, Puig's answer was immediate:

"It actually benefits Grocery Outlet."

As shoppers look for ways to stretch their budgets, Puig said Grocery Outlet has seen increased demand locally.

"We've been seeing a healthier order guide," he said.

Grocery Outlet's business model relies on buying excess inventory from manufacturers. When national brands produce more product than traditional supermarkets can sell, those manufacturers turn to discount retailers to move it.

"The manufacturers are still producing, so we're their shot to capitalize on items that they're trying to clean their warehouse of."

Because Grocery Outlet buys products in bulk at discounted prices, it can pass those savings along to shoppers, which is a strategy that has become increasingly attractive as food prices rise.

The company operates more than 500 independently

more GROCERY, pg. 5



The former Rite-Aid location is getting a facelift. But whose face?

PUTTING THE COOL IN SCHOOL

By Fisher



Artist Dave Titus stands in front of the new mural at MHS.

What began as an idea to mentor student artists has left Mammoth High School with its first large-scale outdoor mural and may become a model for similar projects across Mono County.

The mural, completed in June by local illustrator Dave Titus and six Mammoth High students, stands near the school's entrance across from the multipurpose room. It depicts three huskies standing in front of Mammoth Mountain with a sprawling sunset behind it.

The artwork came together after school over several weeks this past spring, with students helping shape the design and paint every stage of the project.

For Titus, the project was a chance to combine two long-time interests. After decades as a freelance illustrator and

years coaching youth baseball, he wanted to create an opportunity for students to learn from a working artist while leaving something lasting behind.

"I had this idea of mentoring students to paint a mural," Titus said.

Titus serves on the Mono County Board of Education, and he proposed the project during a discussion about expanding arts opportunities for students. The mural happened to "totally satisfy" the county's strategic arts plan, adopted in 2024, which encourages partnerships between schools and local artists, and that helped fund the materials for the project.

With the project approved, MHS art teacher Heather O'Leary posted flyers around the school advertising the opportunity, and, in April, the group met weekly after school

to brainstorm ideas.

Students wanted the mural to feel unmistakably Mammoth, so they centered it on Mammoth Mountain. Titus initially imagined a dog sled, but the students reworked the concept into three huskies representing Mammoth's elementary, middle and high schools.

"We kind of collaborated," O'Leary said. "Dave pulled those ideas together."

Once the design was finalized, students prepared the wall before Titus projected the design onto the building one evening so it could be traced. From there, they mixed dozens of custom paint colors and translated the small illustration onto the much larger wall.

Some of the students, who were mostly underclassmen, already knew one another through O'Leary's graphic

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Fisher's a Homer

Next stop: Your wallet

Dysfunction Junction

Z does not care for Boom

Virgin Hummus

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MEN SHOULD JUST SHUT UP

By Fisher

In the new Odyssey adaptation, director Christopher Nolan essentially plucked up a red carpet, wrapped everyone in curtain drapes and Greek armor, and boy, did people eat it up.

I did too.

It's the top-grossing movie of the year so far, and even drummed up a sizable crowd at the Wednesday matinee at Minaret Cinemas, where I sat, wincing through a few too many slit throats for my taste and jumping at some of the loudest sounds I've ever heard in a movie theater.

You can probably gather I'm not much of an action movie buff.

But I still enjoyed "The Odyssey" for what it was: a beautifully presented interpretation of one of history's most influential works, filled with lessons that have survived from the eighth century BC into the 21st. And though, in my opinion, it misses some opportunities to flesh out its characters, it's a fun watch.

At its core, "The Odyssey" is about pride, temptation and what happens when people (especially powerful men) let their egos outrun their judgment. Odysseus is brilliant, brave and resourceful, but he's also stubborn, arrogant and repeatedly humbled by the consequences of his own actions.

The script makes Odysseus' hubris explicit, sometimes through full-fledged reflective monologues and other times through the spectacular

consequences of his decisions. Frankly, it's refreshing to find that message in a blockbuster action movie.

What I wish Nolan had borrowed more faithfully from Homer, though, was the balance in Odysseus' character. He's not just brave. He's clever. Sometimes almost unbelievably so.

Take the Cyclops scene.

In the original epic, Odysseus talks to Polyphemus, gets him drunk, tricks him by saying his name is "Nobody," blinds him only after setting up the trap, then sneaks his men out by tying them beneath the Cyclops' sheep. It's one of the best examples in literature of brains beating brawn.

In Nolan's version, Odysseus more or less stabs the Cyclops in the eye and makes a run for it.

Because we don't get to watch him outsmart his enemy, his later decision to reveal himself – whether by taunting the Cyclops with an arrow in the film or shouting his own name in the original – doesn't hit quite as hard.

Again and again, characters tell us Odysseus is the smartest man they've ever known, but we get fewer chances to actually see it than Homer intended.

The dialogue, too, loses some of its magic here and there.

I get it. Translating an eighth-century BCE epic into a modern blockbuster script isn't exactly easy. But there were a few lines that made me do a double take.

the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra

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

-Orwell

JACK LUNCH

PUBLISHER

Like when Telemachus shouts, "Dad!" to Odysseus. Dude, you just met him. Also, I'm not convinced that's what ancient Greeks were calling their fathers. Maybe... "Father?"

Then there's Odysseus talking about everyone sitting in the Trojan Horse surrounded by "piss and shit." I don't know. Homer might've rolled over in his grave.

The cast is strong, as expected. Anne Hathaway is a convincing Penelope. Matt Damon plays the worn-down, world-weary Odysseus well. Tom Holland plays himself. (Kidding. Sort of.) He actually does a solid job as Telemachus.

Charlize Theron is probably the weakest part of the cast, though that may have more to do with the costume department than her performance. She spends much of the movie

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looking like she wandered in from a Fashion Nova campaign.

Visually, it's a beautiful movie. The landscapes, the ships, the battles—the sheer scale of everything makes you feel like you're right there, drowning at sea and getting struck by lightning alongside everyone else.

Taken together, "The Odyssey" succeeds where it matters. It makes an ancient story feel exciting again without losing sight of why it's endured for nearly 3,000 years.

I just wish Nolan had trusted Homer a little more. Odysseus didn't become one of literature's greatest heroes because he could win a fight, but because he could outthink one.

And yeah. It might also be the loudest movie ever made.

ROCK FIRE UPDATE

The Rock Fire had burned 11,981 acres by Thursday afternoon and was 18% contained, with containment lines reaching Highway 395.

The fire, which started Monday near Black Rock Springs Road and Highway 395 between Big Pine and Independence, has spread west into the John Muir Wilderness, prompting the Inyo National Forest to close the area and several campgrounds.

The forest closure, effective Thursday, includes four trailheads connecting to the Pacific Crest Trail: Sawmill Pass, Red Lake, Taboose Pass and Birch Lake. Closed campgrounds include Goodale Creek Campground, Taboose Creek Campground and Tinnemaha Creek

Campground.

Pacific Crest Trail hikers are being rerouted around the fire via Highway 395.

As of Thursday, 986 personnel were assigned to the fire, including 110 engines, four dozers and two water tenders.

Firefighting efforts have been complicated by thunderstorms, high temperatures and shifting winds. Crews are also facing steep, rocky terrain and dense brush, which have made access and containment efforts more difficult.

Evacuation shelters were established at Big Pine Town Hall, Statham Hall/Senior Center in Lone Pine, and the Inyo County Consolidated Office Building in Bishop.



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LETTERS

Bearly competent

Dear Editor,

This is an open letter to Mammoth Lakes Town Council, Mammoth's Town Manager, Mammoth Lakes Tourism, Mammoth Lakes Police, Mono County Sheriff, Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce & Mammoth Mountain. Please know I am fully aware of the responsibilities of each noted organization, however, being that we are a small community whose economic engine is driven by tourism, it behooves you all to pay attention and work toward a solution to our wildlife concerns. I am also aware that the leaders of our community will pretend to listen, and then defer to California's Dept. Fish and Wildlife, claiming it's their purview. Which I find pathetic.

For decades Mammoth Lakes was revered worldwide for our wildlife management program led by Steve Searles. However, in recent years this successful program has been gutted. As a result, Victor was slaughtered, our past Mayor requested a bear trap on her property where a sow and cub were baited, trapped and relocated. In recent weeks, a 17-month old cub was euthanized and now many in the community have witnessed a bear who was struck by a car and is now limping around town.

By the way, this bear was hit in the middle of the day on Minaret Road near the Village over a month ago. Let

me emphasize this ... It's been OVER A MONTH that this creature has been suffering. And I have no doubt there are dozens of similar scenarios.

In the aftermath of Victor's murder, it was standing room only at Town Council.

Council did nothing.

The community again came together in Suite Z when the Mayor had bears trapped on her property.

Council did nothing.

Steve Searles has fielded more than 700 phone calls regarding this injured bear limping around town. This demonstrates how deeply the community is affected. As the video of the suffering bear goes viral, what are our leaders doing?

Nothing.

How can this community continue to turn a blind eye to the suffering of these creatures? Where is our humanity?

Personally, I am disgusted, and as I stated at Town Council nearly a year ago regarding the Mayor having bears trapped, I once felt a sense of pride with regard to our wildlife program, but I am now riddled with embarrassment and disdain.

We have an opportunity, moreover an obligation, to be honorable stewards of our community to include all woodland creatures.

I fear this correspondence will fall on deaf ears, but I would be remiss to not make an effort. Our leaders especially our elected officials have an obligation

to those they serve. And this community has repeatedly come forward quite literally begging for something to be done to protect our wildlife, specifically our bear population.

We cannot rely on our state or federal partners. We have the resources and the moral obligation to restore our local leadership in wildlife conservation and humane wildlife management. Doing so would protect animals, reassure our residents and visitors and preserve the reputation of Mammoth Lakes as a compassionate, responsible destination.

I respectfully demand that our local leaders take immediate and concrete steps, including:

- Publicly acknowledge current failures in local wildlife management and commit to an action plan with clear timelines.
- Reinvest in a local wildlife management program with experienced leadership & adequate staffing restoring the role that made Mammoth Lakes a worldwide model.
- Implement urgent measures to care for and if necessary, humanely capture and treat injured wildlife, to include veterinary assessment and rehabilitation where appropriate.
- Improve road safely and signage in known wildlife crossing areas and pursue traffic-calming measures to reduce vehicle-wildlife collisions.
- Strengthen community education and enforcement around food storage, trash management, and attractant reduction.
- Convene a public forum with Town Staff, law enforcement, local and non-local wildlife experts and the community to report on actions taken and to solicit input.

Protecting our wildlife is an issue where we can act immediately and meaningfully. Please show leadership, restore our wildlife program which will in turn reestablish our credibility as stewards of our environment. It's sad to say, but I and many have little faith in our leaders, but I can't remain silent. I and many others stand at the ready to help implement real solutions.

Dawn L. Vereuck
Mammoth Lakes

Will this time be different?

Jack,

it seems that Klusmire might be a little over-excited about the Billionaire tax. The purported haul of \$100 billion was wrong to begin with, because it counted three ultra-billionaires whose primary residences are not in California, and it counted on taxing real estate directly held by the taxpayer, forgetting that their proposal excludes taxing such property.

But apart from that, an estimated 1/3-1/2 of the haul has already departed, and it left before January 1. Which is another problem - while retroactive taxes have been approved before by prior Supreme Courts, there have never been approvals in the context of an entirely new tax. Wanna bet how this one will fare at the current Court?

And then there's the offsetting income tax that is being lost, with some estimates predicting that more will be lost in no longer being able to tax the income of the fleeing billionaires than will be made up by taxing the wealth of those who remain. And this does not account for the tax-generating jobs and businesses the billionaires are taking with them.

Oh and one more thing. There is nothing in this law that would prevent a future Legislature, disappointed in the meager returns, from lowering the threshold to catch those who cannot leave as easily as billionaires. Like you and me. Did you know that the 16th Amendment, prior to which a federal income tax was considered unconstitutional, was sold in a similar manner? The year it passed, it levied only a 1% tax on a minuscule 1% of the people. Who could possibly object to that?

It happens time and again. It starts by us agreeing to tax the rich, or agreeing to a "temporary" tax. Remember "temporary" Prop. 30 in 2012, which gave California the highest (13%) tax rate of any state and which was supposed to sunset in 2016? Ten years after its original sunset it's still alive and a new proposition has been advanced to make it officially immortal.

Sure, the state promises that this time will be different, that they really won't be coming for you next. Do you believe them?

John Rogitz
Mammoth Lakes



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GROCERY

continued from page 1

operated stores nationwide and reported \$1.17 billion in net sales during the first quarter of fiscal 2026. While sales increased 3.6% compared with the previous year, comparable-store sales declined 1%, driven partly by a decrease in average transaction size. Puig said Mammoth's store has seen stronger demand locally. As one of Grocery Outlet's busier locations, he said it receives a larger share of inventory than some other stores.

"We're getting a lot more Nabisco, Kraft, the big brands," he said. "Before, we were getting a little of it. Now we're getting a lot of it. Modules. Pallet modules, which we could never get before."

The trend started just before summer. When I spoke with Puig for a story last summer, his inventory was sitting at just under seven figures. At the time of our interview Wednesday, there was \$1.3 million worth of inventory sitting on the shelves.

That figure is unusually high for a Grocery Outlet location, about three times the average store, Puig said.

Plastered on the door inside his office were charts showing sales milestones, with handwritten celebrations of beating previous years' numbers.

Despite the larger shipments, Puig said transportation costs have not erased the savings. Grocery Outlet uses freight contracts with capped rates, meaning the cost of transport stays the same regardless of how full the truck is.

One place this really shows is the beef section.

Nationally, beef prices have surged as the U.S. cattle herd has fallen to its lowest level in roughly 75 years after years of drought, high feed costs and herd reductions by ranchers. Because rebuilding cattle supplies takes years, prices have remained elevated even as demand continues.

The average price of 100% ground beef reached \$6.83 per pound in June, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Locally, Puig said those higher prices are pushing some customers toward Grocery Outlet.

"[Customers] are buying more beef because the competition is higher [priced] than we are still," he said.

This week at Mammoth Lakes Vons, the most expensive ground beef, organic grass-fed, was priced at \$11.99 per pound before tax, while the least expensive option, 73% lean ground beef sold in a three-pound bulk package,

was \$6 per pound. At Grocery Outlet, the most expensive ground beef was \$7.99 per pound for 93% lean grass-fed beef, while organic beef was \$6.99 per pound. The budget option, 73% lean ground beef in a three-pound package, was \$5.33 per pound. Puig knows the current inflationary advantage may not last forever. If manufacturers adjust production to match demand, the excess inventory that benefits Grocery Outlet could shrink.

"I don't know if the companies producing are going to start producing less months from now because they adjusted," he said. "But right now they're still pushing it."

For now, he said, "I just hope they keep messing up and we keep taking advantage of it."

For now, Grocery Outlet is benefiting from a moment when shoppers are looking for value. But another change may soon reshape how Mammoth residents shop for groceries.

Puig said he expects a Trader Joe's to open across the street from his store, which may create some short-term challenges for him as shoppers gravitate there.

"The first month's gonna be hell because they've got great pricing," he said. "It's new, right? Anything new in town, everybody's excited about."

Still, Puig does not necessarily see a neighboring Trader Joe's as a long-term threat.

If introduced, he thinks the increased activity around the store could bring more customers to the area and potentially benefit nearby businesses, including Grocery Outlet.

Puig said some Mammoth residents currently travel to Reno or Gardnerville to shop at Trader Joe's. With a local store, he expects some of those shopping trips could stay in town.

"I'm hoping to take advantage of everybody coming because they're excited about it," he said. "Because right now we're piggybacking off of Vons."

However, the Trader Joe's location has not yet been confirmed by the retailer or town officials.

Minaret Mall owner Gary Zentmyer said, "we do have a new tenant going into the former Rite-Aid space, but I am contractually obligated not to disclose the tenant's identity until the tenant chooses to make an announcement."



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JUNE

- 19-28 MONSTER ENERGY MAMMOTH MOTOCROSS
- 26-27 MAMMOTH FEEL GOOD FESTIVAL
- 28 FIRST RESPONDER FESTIVAL

JULY

- 2-5 ARTS ON THE 4TH
- 3 SUMMIT SUNSET PARTY
- 3-4 GIDDY UP COUNTRY MUSIC
- 4 4TH OF JULY PARADE & CELEBRATIONS
- 10-11 MAMMOTH JAZZFEST
- 15-26 UNBOUND CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
- 16 SIERRA SUMMER NIGHTS
- 17-19 MAMMOTH REGGAE FESTIVAL
- 24-25 MAMMOTH VILLAGEFEST
- 24-26 MAMMOTH LAKES OPEN AIR ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR
- 25 MAMMOTH PEDALPALOOZA
- 25 KIDS FISHING FESTIVAL
- 30 TRASHY THURSDAYS
- 31-8/1 MAMMOTH ART WALK

AUGUST

- 5 FAMILY FUN DAY AT THE VILLAGE
- 5-16 SHAKESPEARE IN THE WOODS: KING LEAR
- 7-8 MAMMOTH MARGARITA FESTIVAL
- 13 SIERRA SUMMER NIGHTS
- 14-15 MAMMOTH WINE WEEKEND
- 21-22 MAMMOTH ROCKS
- 27 TRASHY THURSDAYS
- 29 WAVE RAVE SKATE CONTEST

SEPTEMBER

- 4-6 MAMMOTH ROCK N RYE
- 6 SUMMIT SUNSET PARTY
- 11-12 MAMMOTH ROLL AND SOUL
- 12 MAMMOTH GRAN FONDO
- 19 ANNUAL LAKES BASIN CLEANUP
- 18-20 MAMMOTH TUFF
- 20-27 PAINT MONO COUNTY PLEIN AIR COMPETITION
- 24 TRASHY THURSDAYS
- 26 MAMMOTH LAKES HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR
- 24-27 MAMMOTH TRAILFEST

OCTOBER

- 2-6 THE MAMMOTH
- 8 REBELLE RALLY

NOVEMBER

- 13-14 EASTERN SIERRA SNOW AND AVALANCHE WORKSHOP

DECEMBER

- 5 EASTERN SIERRA COMMUNITY CHORUS WINTER CONCERT
- 12 NIGHT OF LIGHTS



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OP/ED

STUCK AT DYSFUNCTION JUNCTION: A CALIFORNIA NIGHTMARE

By Andrea Walker

We are now closer to the one-year anniversary of the Pack Fire than we are to the terrible day it occurred.

For many people outside of McGee Creek, the fire has faded into memory. For those of us who lived through it, the recovery is still unfolding daily.

I am writing because this is no longer just a story about the hardships of our community. It is a test of whether Mono County will learn from its mistakes before another community finds itself standing exactly where we stand today.

As I write this, two wildfires are burning just south of us. With the extremely dry summer we are experiencing, there is no telling where or when the next wildfire will break out. This should concern every resident of the Eastern Sierra.

Storytelling is important for healing and it is important for us to learn from history. So, here we go.

The first signs of trouble came during the fire itself. After a campfire was left unattended by the Forest Service, strong winds stirred it back up and drove it rapidly down McGee Creek, leaving local responders with very little time to save the structures in its path.

Then came the evacuation.

Communication systems surrounding the evacuation failed. Many residents received no official evacuation warning, leaving families confused and uncertain during one of the most frightening moments of their lives. In an emergency,



communication saves lives. It should never be left to chance or treated as an afterthought. I'm grateful to my CHP friend who told me that if I was home, it was time to leave.

Fortunately, the community's strength was a bright light of love and hope, friends took us in, our local businesses and churches stepped in to help organize relief efforts and donations, and the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce rallied people near and far to raise an incredible amount of money to distribute amongst the fire victims.

Unfortunately, the dysfunction within the government response continued long after the flames were extinguished.

Immediately after the fire, with no snow in the forecast, local volunteers

stepped forward, ready to help their neighbors begin cleaning up. Instead, they were told by Mono County Officials that they could not assist because they could not meet environmental requirements— you'll see the irony of that later in this letter.

We understood the importance of protecting the environment, but we also live in one of the windiest places in Mono County. We found ourselves pleading for permission simply to remove twisted sheets of burned metal roofing before they became airborne hazards for our neighbors and for drivers on Highway 395.

From the very beginning, our community was met with restrictions and bureaucracy at a time when we desperately

needed urgency and common sense.

Families spent the holidays displaced in unfamiliar homes. Month after month, emails and questions went unanswered. As winter turned to spring, communication remained absent and inconsistent. When responses did come, they often felt as though they had been written by AI, lacking personality or compassion and leaving many residents wondering whether anyone truly understood the urgency—or the humanity—of what they were experiencing.

Despite it being a very small community, it took seven months just to organize a debris removal program. Once the County finally prepared a contract for bid, it had to be rewritten multiple times because of errors and oversight, delaying the process even further and continuing to consume what should have been the heart of our rebuilding season.

Breaking ground and getting families home again should have been the County's highest priority. Instead, fire recovery felt like an afterthought— something added to the agenda rather than being the agenda itself.

Now that cleanup is underway, additional concerns are emerging.

Local contractors have uncovered buried foundations, rebar, nails, and other debris beneath properties that had already been cleared by the awarded contractor and approved by County employees as good to go. Homeowners

more McGEE, pg. 9

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McGEE

continued from page 8

trusted that “cleared” meant ready to move forward. Instead, some could face additional costs, delays, and another layer of uncertainty hiding the ashes and dirt.

At the same time, residents report that the contractor overseeing the cleanup is assessing potential environmental hazards, such as asbestos, through visual inspections versus proper soil testing.

Residents also believed tree removal would be included as part of the cleanup effort. They invested all of their insurance debris-removal funds only to learn that they would still be responsible for removing the burned trees and vegetation themselves.

We’ve been clearing burned trees from properties in McGee, where it currently costs up to \$400 per ton to dispose of vegetation debris. By chance, my husband ran into a friend at the landfill who told him that vegetation debris from the Inn Fire recovery had been accepted free of charge. Had they not crossed paths that day, we never would have known there was such an inconsistency in how these two fire recoveries were handled. Keep in mind these fires occurred only months apart. Why was one community given that relief while the other was not?

There have also been incidents in which the contractor directed construction traffic through private property without permission, damaging private drives and disregarding property rights after being misinformed by county employees.

Those of you who know me know that I love and admire each person as an individual, but as an organization, there

is something systemically wrong with all of this.

Standing alone, any one of these issues might be dismissed as an unfortunate mistake. Together, they reveal something far more concerning: a pattern of delayed action, poor communication, inconsistency, inadequate oversight, and missed opportunities to ease the burden on families who have already lost so much.

Trust is built through competence, communication, and accountability. Truth is, each delay, each unanswered email, and each newly discovered problem has chipped away at that trust.

Rebuilding homes is difficult enough. Building a home in this county has serious issues—but don’t get me started there. Rebuilding public trust is even harder.

Our community has completely lost trust, and it feels as though the exhaustion and vulnerability that come with trauma have been taken advantage of.

When disaster strikes, people are not operating at their best. They are grieving. They are overwhelmed. They are trying to navigate insurance claims, permits, contractors, temporary housing, financial uncertainty, and the emotional weight of losing the places where they built their lives.

That is exactly when our public officials and government should perform at their highest level. Shocked and traumatized residents should not be left to discover problems, demand answers, and hold the system accountable.

This is when leadership matters most. The conversation we should be having



is not simply about what happened in McGee. It is about what happens to the next Eastside Canyon that ignites.

The question is not if another major wildfire will impact Mono County. The question is when.

When that day comes, is this the response you want for your community?

Do we want another community to experience months of uncertainty, delayed action, inconsistent communication, and costly mistakes? Or do we expect our leaders to acknowledge where the system failed and make the changes necessary to ensure the next response is faster, more transparent, more accountable, and more compassionate?

This letter is not about assigning blame for a wildfire, although I’d love to know who that person was. Unfortunately,

where we live, fires happen. It is about expecting our public officials and government to learn from experience and do better next time.

Every resident of Mono County, the Eastern Sierra and the whole western United States has a stake in this conversation because the next wildfire won’t be coming back to McGee—it will come for another community.

I’m not just writing for my immediate neighbors. I’m writing for everyone who calls this beautiful place home, for all of us who live amongst the sagebrush and the pines.

This isn’t just McGee Creek’s story. It’s a question of whether Mono County is willing to learn from its mistakes before anyone else finds themselves standing where we stand.

So now I ask the question every resident should be asking:

Do we have the leadership, systems, and preparedness in place to respond better next time?

Last year, the people of McGee deserved a recovery marked by urgency, competence, communication, and compassion.

In the future, every community deserves a leadership that has already learned these lessons—not a governing body that is still repeating them.

Andrea and Scott Walker and their three children were displaced without water and power for five months and now live amongst the ruins of their McGee Creek community. Andrea has owned Stellar Brew in Mammoth for 17 years.



Sierra STEM Days

AT WOOLLY'S ADVENTURE SUMMIT

Woolly's Adventure Summit has teamed up with Sierra STEM to bring free, drop-in science activities inspired by the natural wonders of the Eastern Sierra.

June 27 • July 3 • August 1 • Sept 5
Sessions run every 30 minutes from 12PM–3PM



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FACILITIES OPERATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH INYO NATIONAL FOREST
EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGES



Sablak Studio

MAMMOTH LAKES

OPEN AIR ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR

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BOOKS

BOOMERS AND Xs TRY TO CATCH SOME ZZZZs

By Fisher

During its most recent term, the United States Supreme Court cleared the way for Texas to enforce a new law requiring Apple and Google to verify the ages of app store users, part of a broader effort to give parents more control over the apps their children can download.

The law reflects a broader push to protect children from the perceived harms of social media. The first people to experience those harmful effects, advocates say, were members of Generation Z, born sometime between the late '90s and the early 2010s.

My generation.

Born in 2001, I got my first iPod Touch at 11, my first iPhone at 13, and my first anxiety diagnosis at 15. For much of my life, I've heard some version of the same refrain: it's those damn phones.

That conversation reached its peak with Jonathan Haidt's "The Anxious Generation," published in 2024. Haidt struck a chord with parents of Gen Z kids (i.e. Lunch) because he set out to prove what many already believed, that smartphones ruined childhood.

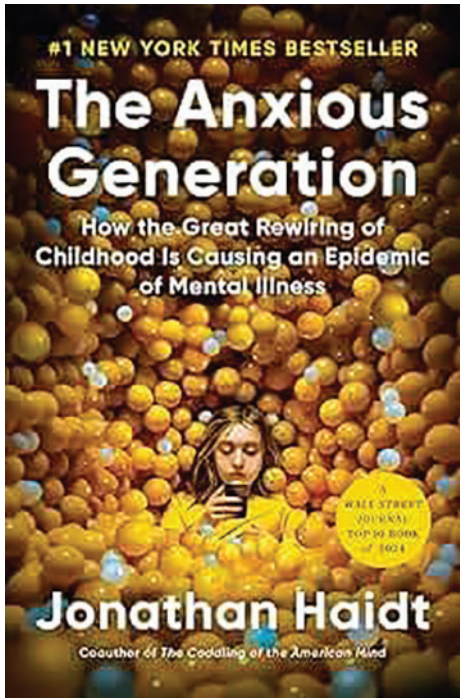
The Anxious Generation
Jonathan Haidt
Penguin Press
400 p.

Haidt opens by comparing children's social media use to sending them to Mars.

"Suppose that when your first child turned ten, a visionary billionaire whom you've never met chose her to join the first permanent human settlement on Mars [...] Mars has gravity, but it's only 38% of what a child would experience on Earth. Children raised in the low-gravity environment of Mars would be at high risk of developing deformities in their skeletons, hearts, eyes, and brains," he writes.

You can see where this is going.

What follows is a parade of analogies, each chapter comparing children to some other unsettling thing. As you read, your child (or yourself) is likened to dogs, pigeons, cats, rats, trees, caterpillars and gambling addicts, all to argue that smartphones replaced a play-based childhood with a phone-based



one, making kids less resilient and more anxious.

His evidence centers on a graph showing mental health indicators bending sharply upward around 2010 and staying there.

Reflexively, I pushed back on most of the book, mainly because it felt a whole lot like an old man shaking his fist at the

world.

Like when Haidt writes that his young daughter once asked him to take away her iPad because she couldn't stop looking at it, even though she wanted to.

No she didn't. That never happened. Don't piss me off.

In one of his earlier points, Haidt argues my generation missed out on learning social risk because our lives moved online. Instead of getting bruised on the playground or figuring out awkward conversations face-to-face, we became afraid of making mistakes because every mistake online amounts to "social death."

To illustrate the point, he tells a story about his puppy. At first, the puppy was afraid to approach larger dogs. But after repeatedly charging toward them and returning to "home base" between Haidt's legs, the puppy learned that most dogs were harmless.

He even cites declining rates of underage drinking and car crashes as evidence that kids aren't taking enough risks anymore. I think you're getting carried away on that one, Jonathan.

I still sang songs. I still played on the playground. And yes, I also learned social skills online. My first Instagram

more ANXIOUS, page 11

PHILLIPS AESTHETIC DERMATOLOGY WELCOMES NEW PROVIDER

Aesthetic Medicine Meets Wellness: New Services at Phillips' Aesthetic Dermatology

We are excited to announce we are accepting new clients with our new provider at Phillips' Aesthetic Dermatology.

Meet Your Provider!

Shayne Phillips is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP-C) with 6 years of experience in aesthetic injectables, specializing in natural-looking results through individualized treatment plans.

She has recently expanded her practice to include Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy with pellet therapy, allowing her to take a more comprehensive approach to wellness and healthy aging.

Shayne's clinical background includes extensive experience in peri-operative surgical settings and interventional radiology, where she developed the precision, attention to detail, and commitment to patient safety that she brings to every treatment.

Originally from Bishop, California, Shayne recently returned to California and is excited to begin seeing patients at Phillips' Aesthetic Dermatology. She looks forward to serving the Eastern Sierra community with compassionate, personalized aesthetic and wellness care. When she's not in the office, Shayne enjoys surfing, traveling, snowboarding, hiking, yoga, Pilates, reading, and gardening.

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ANXIOUS

continued from page 10

username, at age 10, was @paige0pan-da.... Yeah. I learned not to do that one again.

Learning internet slang or figuring out what's okay to post is just a shift in where social learning happens. Kids are still learning what's socially acceptable and what isn't. They're just doing some of it online.

Jonathan Haidt, however, is 60 years old. He doesn't get that. I honestly feel like he read one New York Times story about cancel culture and became convinced that's what every kid is subjected to every day.

The same goes for his claim that kids socialize less. That just doesn't ring true to me.

Kids and teenagers still spend enormous amounts of time with their friends. FaceTiming and texting aren't evidence that kids have stopped socializing, but they are evidence that socializing changed. In fact, I've grown out of constant texting as I've gotten older because I simply have less desire to be in constant contact.

What I will say, in Haidt's defense, is that his book tells a great part of the story for most Generation Z people, or perhaps the whole story for a relatively small group of children.

But after reading beyond the book, I came away feeling that the research is much messier than he presents it. A lot of his data is cherry-picked, and mental health trends don't follow the same pattern everywhere, and phones broadly appear to be wonderful for some kids while

genuinely harmful for others.

That doesn't make Haidt wrong, but it does make me skeptical that anyone has found the explanation for an entire generation.

Most of Haidt's recommendations are pretty harmless. School phone bans? Fine. Delaying social media until kids are older? Sure. The hard part isn't coming up with those ideas, but enforcing them.

My guess is that Generation Z is

anxious partly because of smartphones. But also because everything feels like it's changing all the time. And through it all, we've got guys in their sixties breathing down our necks telling us we're soft because we don't binge drink as much.

I came away from The Anxious Generation thinking it explains an important piece of why some kids struggle online. I just don't think it explains my generation.

“We've got guys in their 60s ... telling us we're soft because we don't binge drink as much”

-Fisher

I think the kids will be alright.

Editor's note: For the record, I have never encouraged Fisher to binge drink and have only served her a work deadline margarita before noon once in the past month.

Lunch's take on Anxious Generation appeared on page 2 of the April 13, 2024 issue which you can find in thesheetnews.com online archives. The quote that stuck out for this 55-year old Gen Z parent:

“My central claim in this book,” writes Haidt, “is that the trends of overprotection in the real world and underprotection in the virtual world are the major reasons why children born after 1995 became the anxious generation.”



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ACE
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MURAL

continued from page 1

design class or track, while others met through the project.

"They just all really got along super well," O'Leary said. "They were goofy and always listening to music."

As the weeks went on, O'Leary said the students became increasingly independent.

"The first day I went out to paint, the girls were showing me what to do," she said. "They were kind of explaining how the color system works. It was really cool."

Titus said watching students grow more confident was one of the most

rewarding parts of the project.

"I think right now, after going through all that, they could go paint a mural just like we did on their own if they wanted," he said.

The project also reflects a shift in Titus' own career. After working for decades as a commercial illustrator with clients including Disney and Target, he said advances in artificial intelligence have reduced demand for some illustration work. In recent years he has returned to mural painting, something he first enjoyed as a teenager.

"I've really been enjoying being outside, working away from the desktop," he said.

Both Titus and O'Leary hope the mural is only the beginning.

Titus wants to bring similar mentorship projects to schools throughout Mono County, including Bridgeport, Coleville and other communities. Rather than leading every project himself, he hopes more local artists will eventually become mentors.

"It doesn't have to be just me," he said. "The goal is to engage more artists, more students and see what more we can do."

O'Leary said she also hopes the project encourages more public art in Mammoth.

"If you go to other towns, there's murals everywhere," she said. "It's just so colorful. I would hope maybe this will spark some interest and maybe



we could get some more up in town."

She said many of the student murals that once decorated Mammoth High disappeared during renovations, leaving the campus feeling "very sterile and boring." The new mural, she said, is a reminder of what student artwork can contribute to a school.

The mural was completed shortly after the end of the school year and

later sealed with a UV-protective coating.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned for mid-August, where Titus said the students who helped create the mural will sign it together.

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TOWN OF Mammoth Lakes

DID YOU KNOW?

→ **Did you know that every two years, the Town of Mammoth Lakes holds an election to elect members of the Town Council?**

This year's municipal election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

- Three Town Council seats will be on the November ballot.
- The nomination period for members of the Town Council is from July 13 to August 7, 2026, with the potential to be extended to August 12, 2026 if any of the three incumbents do not run for Town Council again.
- The Town's Candidate Guide and Local Contributions Ordinance can be found on the Town's website at townofmammothlakes.ca.gov/1156/Elections.
- Anyone wishing to learn more about the process to run for Town Council or who is interested in pulling papers should schedule an appointment with Town Clerk Jamie Gray at 760-965-3602 or jgray@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.

TownofMammothLakes.ca.gov   **Town of Mammoth Lakes**

KLUSMIRE

MINDBEND OVER MATTER

It's been a searing hot summer so far which means I have a bad case of melted brain that refuses to focus on a single thing and instead jumps around like a cricket on a hot skillet since there will be no frog in slowly hot then boiling water for me because I've already reached the frying point from too much heat and too much travel already with more to come like a relentless onslaught of angst and to top it off I'm bugged by a broken travel promise that I will now fulfill which is that there is a brand spanking new Starbucks in Mojave the windmill and weird mannequin capital of California that you have to drive through to reach LA and other urban catastrophes to get to a damn airport and get the hell out of here so a nice new spot for a pee break in Mojave is welcome news and the place is new new new and big and stylish with couches and chairs and tables and you guessed it clean rest-rooms and the quite nice Mojave-ites working there seem to be abundantly happy to have air conditioning and spiffy uniforms to wear while serving up the same sugar-laced, over-priced coffee beverages that are only re-deemed by the Marshmallow Treats which are far better than anything from Rice Krispies so buy a bunch of those because they are tasty and they won't blow away when you are walking back to your car and getting back on the road which is a parade of patches and potholes since Kern County appar-ently doesn't prioritize CC roads like Inyo County where you can take a passenger car up one of several paved roads into a paved parking lot where you can then walk for a few minutes and be in a Wilderness Area for God's sake which should be the only roads the county prioritizes because they make the county unique and because maybe seven people care about potholes in the roads in Big Pine and even fewer want to ever see a county vehicle in Darwin or Keeler because that would ruin the rustic I'm here to hide from the world leave me alone you loser, money grubber vibe in those little towns which is the exact opposite vibe of Mammoth Lakes and its cohort of Eastern Sierra money grubbers whose latest little plan to make it easier to extract cash from visi-tors is to pay off United Airlines so it

Don't just do something. Stand there.

-Inyo County Economic Development Strategy

will offer year-round daily flights right into humble little Bishop home to the only functioning airport in the Eastern Sierra and the toll for such a wonderful expansion of the wallet surgery season is a mere \$200,000 and of course they want Bishop and Inyo County to pitch in because they are part-ners and they want to keep Inyo County - whose supervisors didn't even put eco-nomic development on their priority list during their all-day priority session strat-egery retreat whose highlight was cookies and sandwiches from Great Basin Bakery but that apparently wasn't enough to convince the latest what's-his-name Inyo CAO from haul-ing ass out of here on the priority road he drove in on meaning the county still has only one surefire tourism econo-mic development plan which is to put emergency spike strips on southbound lanes of US 395 on random Sundays so visitors cannot drive back to SoCal and have to stay for at least another night somewhere in Inyo which Bishop

would wholeheartedly support since its only tourism promotion effort is to not mess with Schat's Bakkery or Mule Days but since they are both good partners they should fork over \$5,000 each and tell Mammoth Lakes, Mam-moth Tourism and Mammoth Moun-tain to pick up the remaining \$150,000 which should be easy since Mammoth Lakes is saving so much money by not hiring cops or Bear Man Steve Searles its bank account is more then flush and Mammoth Tourism spends that much money sending waves of staff to SoCal beachside tourism conferences to chat with former honcho John Urdi about social media strategies which translates into giving all 20-somethings with a phone \$5 for posting crap about Mammoth while Mammoth Mountain is just sitting around chuckling about how it convinced all the local govern-ment chuckleheads to be first in line when it comes to paying the United flight subsidies which is a joke that never gets old.

Jon Klusmire of Bishop is pretty damn sure Inyo County's tourism promotion and economic development slogans are, "Don't just do something, stand there."



Mammoth Community Water District

Planning a landscaping project? We're here to help!

- Contact the Mammoth Community Water District
- Water-saving tips
 - Selecting climate-appropriate plants
 - Planning an efficient irrigation system
 - Turf grass replacement rebates available

Please note, a permit may be required.

2026 IRRIGATION SCHEDULE

		SPRINKLER TIMES						
		1 a.m. - 11 a.m. & 4 p.m. - 11 p.m.						
EVEN Address	MON		X		X	X		X
	TUE	X						
ODD Address	WED			X		X	X	
	THUR	X						
		FRI	X					
		SAT		X	X	X		
		SUN	X					

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Help Wanted



GBUAPCD HEARING BOARD ALTERNATE OPENING

Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District has an opening for an alternate on its Hearing Board. The Hearing Board is an independent quasi-judicial body with the authority to provide variances from air district regulations and issue orders of abatement under certain circumstances. Hearing Board members are appointed to three-year terms. If you live within Inyo, Mono, or Alpine counties and are interested in applying, more information, including application instructions, are available at <https://www.gbuapcd.org/District/HearingBoard>

Mono County Service Area 1 is recruiting for an Administrative Board Secretary to oversee and process administrative and light financial records.

For more information please visit <https://monocounty.ca.gov/csa1/page/board-secretary>

Send resumes to Lorinda Beatty at CSA1secretarymono@gmail.com

Help Wanted



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

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

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

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

Help Wanted



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

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

Help Wanted

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

Hilton Creek Community Services District in Crowley Lake seeks a **PT Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator I, II or III.** Salary \$65,000-\$85,000 negotiable, based on experience. For more information visit <https://www.hiltoncreekcsd.com/employment>, email info@hiltoncreekcsd.com or call (760) 965-9696

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

Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory

Mammoth Chocolate & Confections Inc.
437 Old Mammoth Rd., Sp. 190
P.O. Box 7189
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a corporation. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein in 1982. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on June 26, 2026

File Number 2026-0076
TS #2026-0086
(7/4, 7/11, 7/18, 7/25)



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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.





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PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice of Election

NOTICE BY MONO COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS OFFICES FOR WHICH CANDIDATES ARE TO BE ELECT-ED AT THE NOVEMBER 3, 2026, GENERAL ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that offices for which candi-dates are to be elected at the General Election to be held on the 3rd day of November, 2026 are as follows:

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES *
Qualifications: Must be a registered voter residing in the Town of Mammoth Lakes.
Council Member – 3 Seats (4-year term)

SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARDS
Qualifications: Must be a registered voter residing in the district or trustee area as applicable.

BISHOP UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
(Coordinated with Inyo County)
3 Seats (4-year term)

EASTERN SIERRA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
1 Seat – Trustee Area #1 (4-year term)
1 Seat – Trustee Area #3 (4-year term)
1 Seat – Trustee Area #5 (4-year term)

KERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
(Coordinated with Inyo and Kern County)
1 Seat – Trustee Area #2 (4-year term)

MAMMOTH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
2 Seats (4-year term)

MONO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION BOARD
1 Seat – Trustee Area #2 (4-year term)
2 Seats – Trustee Area #3 (4-year term)

ROUND VALLEY JOINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIST.
(Coordinated with Inyo County)
2 Seats (4-year term)

SPECIAL DISTRICT BOARDS (COMMUNITY SERVICE DISTRICTS, FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS, GROUND-WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS, HEALTHCARE DISTRICTS, PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICTS, RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, WATER DISTRICTS)
Qualifications: Must be a registered voter residing in the district. Additional qualifications may apply depend-ing on the specific office. Please confirm with individual districts.

Antelope Valley Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Antelope Valley Water District
3 Seats (4-year term)
Birchim Community Services District
3 Seats (4-year term)
Bridgeport Fire Protection District
3 Seats (4-year term)
Bridgeport Public Utility District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Chalfant Valley Fire Protection District/CSD
2 Seats (4-year term)
Hilton Creek Community Services District
3 Seats (4-year term)

June Lake Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
June Lake Public Utility District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Lee Vining Fire Protection District
3 Seats (4-year term)
Lee Vining Public Utility District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Long Valley Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Mammoth Community Water District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Mammoth Lakes Community Services District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Mono City Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Paradise Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
3 Seats (2-year term)
Southern Mono Healthcare District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District
3 Seats (4-year term)
Wheeler Crest Community Services District
2 Seats (4-year term)
Wheeler Crest Fire Protection District
2 Seats (4-year term)
White Mountain Fire Protection District
3 Seats (4-year term)

Candidate forms will be available from July 13, 2026 to August 7, 2026, and may be obtained from the Mono County Registrar's Office at 74 N. School Street in Bridge-port, CA.

* Candidates wishing to run for Mammoth Lakes Town Council must speak with the Town Clerk at 760-965-3602, or via email at jgray@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov.

If an incumbent has not filed by 5:00 p.m. on August 7, 2026, any qualified person, other than the incumbent, may file by no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 12, 2026.

If by 5:00 p.m. on August 12, 2026, an insufficient number of persons have filed for the Special District Board Of-fices, and a petition for an election has not been filed, appointments will be made pursuant to Elections Code §10515.

If by 5:00 p.m. August 12, 2026, an insufficient number of persons have filed for the School District Governing Board Offices, and a petition for an election has not been filed, appointments will be made pursuant to Education Code §5326, §5328, §5328.5.

More information regarding Candidate Filing can be found on the County Election website: <https://mono-county.ca.gov/elections/page/candidates-4>

Dated: July 15, 2026
QUEENIE BARNARD
MONO COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER-REGISTRAR
TS #2026-0088

Notice of Ordinance

Notice is hereby given that on July 15, 2026 the **Mam-moth Lakes Town Council** introduced an Ordinance entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES, STATE OF CALIFOR-NIA, RENEWING THE TOWN'S MILITARY EQUIP-MENT USE POLICY PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 7071 (AB 48).

A copy of the complete text of the Ordinance is posted and may be read at the Town Offices, Minaret Mall, Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, and/or a copy may be obtained from the office of the Town Clerk at a nominal charge.

Dated: July 16, 2026
JAMIE GRAY, Town Clerk
Town of Mammoth Lakes
TS #2026-0092

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

Mammoth Chocolate & Confections Inc.

Mammoth Chocolate & Confections Inc.
437 Old Mammoth Rd., Sp. 190
P.O. Box 7189
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

This business is conducted by a corpo-ration. The registrant began to transact business under the fictitious business name listed herein in 1982. This statement was filed with the Mono County Clerk on June 26, 2026

File Number 2026-0076
TS #2026-0087
(7/4, 7/11, 7/18, 7/25)

PERSONALS

I saw you ... didn't have a shot on goal last weekend until the final three minutes. We should start calling you 'Closing Time'.

I saw you ... have become a huge soccer fan. Which is fitting, because I dream of nutmeg-ging you.

HARTLEY

PUKE GREEN SHERBERT

Okay, I have had enough. I keep hear-ing about Justin Herbert and how great he COULD BE if LITERALLY EVERY-THING was better around him. This coach would help, this OC would help. His linemen being healthy would help. If the other team wouldn't intercept his passes, he would be better. Let's start with THIS ... IF HE PLAYED LIKE AN NFL QB IN THE PLAYOFFS IN-STEAD OF LIKE A HIGH SCHOOL QB I WOULD BELIEVE ALL THE HYPE. How many years does he get to suck? They keep saying he is going to be great. He has been in the league for 6 years already. This year is 7. Drake Maye took last year's godawful Patriots to the Super Bowl. Herbert has never won a playoff game.

Speaking of lists, I hate this time of foot-ball season. This is when the "experts" resort to making endless LISTS of top players, QBs and mascots. Drivel. This gives them time to make up stuff like Herbert being ranked 10 spots ahead of Jalen Hurts who has been to two Super Bowls and won one. Here is my Silly Season of the NFL List.

1. Lists. Every idiot making a list. You can line up all the opinions and stats you want; the games are the proof.
2. Anything related to the Steelers. How great they look in bikini bottoms running around without anyone cover-ing them.
3. Any mention of QBs working with their receivers at some beach house in Malibu. Who cares?
4. That players are still dumb enough to get arrested every year at this time. If you want to beat up your wife or your baby-momma, take your ass on vaca-tion without her. At the very least, don't do it in front of your soon-to-be hy-phenated kids.

Request for Public Comment

On behalf of Cellco Partnership and its controlled affiliates doing business as Verizon Wireless, **American Towers LLC is proposing to increase the height of an existing stealth monopole telecommunications tower** from 56' to 80' along with a 30-foot buffer surrounding the current lease area, at 133 Vista Point Dr., Lee Vining, Mono County, CA 93541, APN: 021-080-026-000, lat: 37.94553, long: -119.11257.

The modified tower will be fitted with A0 IR light-ing. American Towers LLC seeks comments from all interested persons on any potential significant impact the proposed action could have on the quality of the human environment pursuant to 47 C.F.R. Section 1.1307, including potential impacts to historic or cul-tural resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Interested persons may review the project application pending with the Federal Communications Commis-sion (FCC) at www.fcc.gov/asr/applications by entering Form 854 File No. A1383934. Interested persons may comment or raise environmental impact concerns about the proposed action by filing a Request for Environmental Review with the FCC. The FCC strongly encourages all interested parties to make such filings online, following the instructions found at www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest. Paper filings can be sent to: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554. The Request must also be sent to American Towers LLC, by e-mailing a copy to enviro.services@americantower.com or mailing a copy to: American Tower, 10 Presidential Way, Woburn, MA 01801 ATTN: Environmental Compliance.

Requests or comments should be limited to environ-mental and historic/cultural resource impact concerns and must be received on or before 8/22/2026. This invi-tation to comment is separate from any local planning/ zoning process that may apply to this project.

TS #2026-0089

5. That there is no football and I end up watching 10 minute recaps of MLB games. They worked hard to speed up the game of baseball but to me, the 10 minute recaps are still too long.

6. Injury rehab reports. Don't care. I look at the injury reports September 1st. Right before I do 20 fantasy drafts. 'Til then I don't give a damn if Malik Nabers has had 3 surgeries on his knee.

7. Daniel Jones. I hate him all year long, and yet admire him for this one outrageous skill. How has he talked two teams into paying him hundreds of mil-lions of dollars?

The Colts just gave him \$100 million while he is recovering from a torn achil-les. He was bad with two good achilles! This is a classic case of someone looking like they know what they are doing, or saying they know what they are doing, but are, in fact, clueless. Not only would I have not paid Daniel Jones or traded two first round picks for CB Sauce Gardner (when I might need those draft picks to draft a QB!), I would have fired the GM, the Head Coach, The OC and the QB coach for asking. I would have fired every other coach for not slapping the crap out of the GM, Head Coach, OC and QB coach for recommending it.

8. NFL analysts and experts mak-ing trade predictions. They make trade predictions for the same player to three teams ... see I was right!!!! Yeah, you were right.

9. Adam Schefter, Ian Rapaport, Tom Pelisero, Mike Garafalo ... any NFL news insider. They don't know anything

10. Jon Gruden. Why do people keep putting microphones near his mouth? Gruden. Shut up. He is talking now about how he doesn't think QB play is evolving but is DISSOLVING. This is the same guy who was infamous for having play calls that were so long it took a minute to give the play in the huddle. He was proud of that. Ever heard of "work smarter, not harder" dumbass?

These old-school idiots that think they did everything better back in the day and now everyone sucks ... they are tiresome. His ass was fired from two dif-ferent teams. How he got the second job was astounding enough.

And why is he considered a QB guru when he developed NO QBs? He had his best years in Oakland with Rich Gan-non, who was 40 by the time he played for Gruden. He won the Super Bowl in Tampa with Brad Johnson, who was 34 at the time.

For the remainder of Gruden's career in Tampa he started Bruce Gradkowski, Chris Simms, Jeff Garcia, Brian Griese, Luke McCown, Tim Rattay and Shaun King. What? How did their development go? He kept tossing away QBs like used condoms. This one is used, this one has a hole in it ... maybe HE was the prob-lem! Gruden was handed a Ferrari with that Bucs roster and won one race then crashed it the next year and destroyed the team. Jackass. He is like a kid who keeps wrecking cars and his parents

more HARTLEY, pg. 17

HARTLEY

continued from page 16

keeps wrecking cars and his parents keep giving him a new one.

... Another Bills player just commended the coaching staff and team for the relaxed vibe they have now. Guess they are having a great time. Can't wait for this crash. Y'all football players right?

Olive Garden just wrapped up their Caribbean Summer. Huh? Do the people that run Olive Garden know where Italy is? Oh, I read it wrong. It said Calabrian summer. And I was about to go OFF.

You ever look at your PC or phone and feel like you are being stalked? I have random thoughts so every now and then I Google something and for the next year I get stalked by that search. Not only do things just show up in Google, but in YouTube too. Guess I shouldn't log into so many things using my Google account. They are relentless. I am playing solitaire and the shit pops up in my game app. It's crazy. I open my phone to play a game ... HI HAROLD, WE KNOW YOU WERE SEARCHING FOR CROTCHLESS UNDERWEAR ON JUNE 10, WOULD YOUR WIFE BE INTERESTED IN SOME OF THESE? What the hell? I think they have serial killers working as ad folks and designers of these programs to track you. That is the only explanation. HI HAROLD, I SAW YOU STARING AT ME, IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT. YOU CAN KISS ME ... Wait, what?! Unplugged. I think I am going off the grid for a bit.

You ever see a headline and you KNOW it's stupid. It always says..... ROCK STAR COMES OUT AS GAY

AND GETS DIVORCED. You think it's someone you know. You know, like a ROCK STAR. Then you click on it and it's Caleb Shomo, lead singer of the band Beartooth. Huh? They toss around the term STAR like it's nothing now. Good for him for discovering his sexuality. Bad for the woman he called his THEN-WIFE. Never heard that term before, but well-done for originality. But stop tossing around STAR.

Taco Bell is under investigation for an outbreak in its stores due to bad produce that causes customers to have EXPLOSIVE DIARRHEA. So this is what they had to do: Signs posted at several Taco Bell locations in Michigan last week warned customers that the restaurants were "currently unable to sell Lettuce, Cilantro Onion, Pico de Gallo, and Guacamole due to a nationwide recall."

We know we are a Mexian restaurant but don't eat the Cilantro, Pico De Gallo or Guacamole. But we still got rice, cheese and refried beans. That's what we have in every dish anyway, just in different shapes. The funniest thing was that they actually have PRODUCE. They have PRODUCE? Taco Bell. No reason to stop

unless you are high and want cheap food that is not worth what you are paying for it. Or unless you are constipated and want to be cleared out. Open the door ... I ate at Taco Bell.

This is a tub of hummus (see photo at right). Come on now, are we serious? How the hell did an Ad Exec sign off on this one? I mean, it's funny but can you see some kid telling his mom..... I WANT THE VIRGIN HUMMUS MOM. IF you strap on a bomb and blow up some innocent people, do you get 72 of these? I know, there is much debate about the truth of that theory but ... come on now.



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GULL LAKE PARK - JUNE LAKE, CA

LIVE MUSIC — RAFFLE — KIDS GAMES

OFF THE SLOPES

SOME DISEASES STAY HIDDEN UNTIL WE TALK ABOUT THEM

By Steve Shatkin

For the better part of 15 years, Tracie and I have been fighting for our daughter Bree's life. I say daughter because that is who she is to me. Bree is my stepdaughter, but she calls me Dad, and I have never taken that lightly. When a child gives you that title, you do not get to wear it only when things are easy. You wear it in the middle of the night. You wear it in hospital rooms, in courtrooms, in rehab facilities, in hard conversations, and in the silence after a phone call you never wanted to receive.

Our story is not clean or simple. Addiction and mental illness rarely are.

When Bree was in high school, the calls from the attendance office became part of our lives. She was absent again. She was missing from class again. Something was wrong again. At first, like many parents, we tried to understand it through the lens of teenage rebellion, bad choices, bad friends, or a kid who just needed more structure. But over time, the situation became much bigger than missed classes.

There were intensive outpatient programs when she was a teenager. There were promises, setbacks, arguments, tears, and stretches where we thought maybe things were finally turning around. Then came the harder

years, the years that addiction took over in ways we could not control. At one point, Tracie and I had to make one of the most painful decisions a parent can make. Bree had to test clean or she could no longer live in our house. That kind of boundary is sometimes called tough love, but there is nothing simple about it. It does not feel tough. It feels heart-breaking. It feels like standing in two fires at once. We loved Bree, but we also had three other children who needed us. They needed safety, consistency, and parents who were still present for them. Addiction does not just happen to the person using drugs. It happens to the entire family. It changes the air in the house. It changes holidays, routines, finances, sleep, trust, and the way everyone holds their breath.

Bree was homeless for nearly two years. As a parent, there are not many things more painful than knowing your child is out there and not knowing if she is safe, warm, fed, or alive. Eventually, she was arrested out of state and reached out to us. We helped get her into another rehab program. That program was short lived, like many attempts before it. There were accidents that should have killed her. A rollover car crash. A fall down several flights of

cement stairs. It is a miracle she survived both. It is also a miracle she has not overdosed. Bree has lost friends to overdoses. We have seen the devastation that follows and we know too many families that carry that grief forever.

Then, about two years ago, Bree finally decided she wanted to try to get sober. That sentence should feel like the turning point in a movie. It should be the moment when the music changes and the road becomes easier. But real life is not written that way. What we did not fully understand at the time was that years of drug use had been masking serious mental health struggles. As Bree began the difficult work of sobriety, other symptoms came into the light. She was eventually diagnosed with serious mental illness, including bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. Over the past couple of years, she has experienced severe psychosis, auditory and visual hallucinations, and extreme paranoia. Those words can sound frightening when they are written on a page. They are even more frightening when they are happening to someone you love. Bree has believed people were watching her. She has believed she was not safe in her own room. She has talked about nanobots infecting her. Once, during a psychotic

episode, she drove into downtown Los Angeles looking for a portal that would take her back to reality. I share this not to sensationalize her illness and certainly not to demonize Bree. I share it because this is what mental illness can look like inside a real family. It is terrifying, exhausting, confusing, and heart-breaking. It is also human and I know many of you reading this can relate.

Looking through the trees, Bree is not her diagnosis. She is not her worst moment. She is not a collection of symptoms. She is a daughter, a sister, a person with humor, memories, intelligence, pain, fear, courage, and worth. She is a really great person. Mental illness is still too often treated like an unseen disease, something families are expected to whisper about or hide. Addiction carries its own stigma. Psychosis carries another. Too many people suffer in silence because they are afraid of how they will be judged. Too many parents suffer in silence because they think they are the only ones getting the 2 a.m. phone calls, the desperate texts, the pleas for help, the terrifying statements that do not make sense but still demand love, empathy and action.

We still get those calls.

see DISEASE, page 19

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DISEASE

continued from page 18

Bree is now 31 and living on her own in a rented room in Southern California. Tracie and I support her as long as she continues making healthy choices. That support has boundaries, but it also has compassion. We are not trying to control every part of her life. We are trying to help her build one. She is currently in a psychosis program at UCLA, where she has a team of therapists and psychiatrists helping monitor her medication and mental health. That kind of care matters. It is not perfect, and it is not instant, but it matters. Adjusting medication for serious mental illness can be an arduous process. Powerful antipsychotic medications can bring powerful side effects. Some medications help one symptom while creating another challenge. It takes time, patience, medical guidance, and a lot of courage from the person taking them. Bree is a fighter and one of the bravest people I know.

Bree is doing better than she was six months ago. She still has a very long road ahead. So do we. That is one of the hardest lessons I have learned as a parent. There is no quick fix. You do not solve addiction and mental illness with one conversation, one rehab program, one doctor, one boundary, one apology, one good week, or one moment of clarity. As a lifelong athlete I've run many marathons, and I'm learning to run this one. And like any marathon, there are miles where you feel strong, and there are miles where you are not sure you can keep going.

There have been nights when Tracie and I have been scared, angry, exhausted, and heartbroken. There have been times when we did not know what the

right decision was. Help can become enabling if you are not careful. Boundaries can feel cruel even when they are necessary. Hope can feel dangerous because disappointment has already taken so much from you. But we keep going. We keep going because Bree is still here. We keep going because recovery is not always a straight line. We keep going because mental illness is illness, not a character flaw. We keep going because addiction is not a moral failure. We keep going because love does not mean rescuing someone from every consequence, and it does not mean refusing to stop seeing their humanity.

I am sharing our story because I know there are other families living some version of it right now. Maybe your child is missing school. Maybe your adult son or daughter is using drugs. Maybe someone you love is hearing voices, seeing things, or living in a reality that you cannot reach. Maybe you are ashamed to tell your friends what is happening. Maybe you are terrified people will judge your family. Maybe you are just tired. You are not alone.

The more we talk about mental health and addiction, the more we strip away the shame that keeps people isolated. Silence protects stigma. Conversation weakens it. That does not mean every private detail belongs to the public. Families deserve privacy. People living with mental illness deserve dignity. But we can speak honestly and compassionately about the reality of these struggles without reducing anyone to them.

There is hope.

Hope does not always look like a perfect ending. Sometimes hope looks



From left: Steve, Laurie and Bree heading for Tomorrowland.

like a daughter answering the phone. Sometimes it looks like taking medication even when the side effects are hard. Sometimes it looks like making it through one more night without running. Sometimes it looks like a parent setting a boundary and still saying, I love you. Sometimes it looks like a treatment team, a rented room, a sober day, a calmer week, or one honest conversation. For Tracie and me, hope looks like Bree still fighting and it looks like us still fighting with her. We have not given up on our daughter. We will not give up on her. And if sharing our story helps one

family feel less alone, one parent feel less ashamed, or one person struggling with addiction or mental illness feel more seen, then it is worth telling.

This disease does not have to remain unseen.

We erase stigma by talking about it, by meeting it with compassion, by telling the truth, and by remembering that behind every diagnosis, every relapse, every crisis, and every late night phone call, there is a person who is still worthy of love.

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NFS Cabin
BEDS: 2
BATHS: 1.5
SQFT: 1016



CreekHouse #1463 - \$1,485,999

Stunning view town home in the popular CreekHouse community! This home boasts modern construction complete with 2 large decks, a gourmet kitchen, open floorplan and more!! Move in before summer!

CONDO
BEDS: 3
BATHS: 2.5
SQ FT: 1696



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CONDO
BEDS: 3
BATHS: 3.5
SQFT: 2251



Chateau Sierra #58 - \$959,000

Remodeled 3BD/3BA townhome plus bonus room in a prime location. Features granite, stainless appliances, designer finishes, and a large balcony. Amenities include a pool, spa, and sauna. Ideal retreat, rental, or full-time living.

CONDO
BEDS: 3
BATHS: 3
SQFT: 1572



Snowcreek Fairway Homes #851 - \$739,000

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CONDO
BEDS: 2
BATHS: 2
SQ FT: 1348



Forest Service Cabin #22 - \$299,000

BHistoric 1935 Forest Service log cabin in Mammoth Lakes' Lake Mary Tract. Featuring 2 beds, 1 bath, stone fireplace, creekfront setting, and separate gear cabin. Pure rustic mountain charm!

CABIN
BEDS: 2
BATHS: 1
SQ FT: 687



LISTING DETAILS! CA DRE #01812140

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