

# the sheet

News, Views & Culture of the Eastern Sierra



What's at the end of this Highway 395 rainbow? See more on p. 13.

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FREE

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## HUSKIES FOOTBALL CONTINUES UPWARD TRAJECTORY

Undefeated team preps for their biggest game of the year

By Pike

Martin Ezidro. But the players call him Coach Mar. It's his third year coaching Mammoth High School's football team. 2019 - the year before COVID - his Huskies went 0-7.

Last season, Coach Mar got a few new coaches - Mammoth locals, some with kids on the team. Having more coaching staff - men like offensive coordinator James Gray - gave Coach Mar time to step back and think big picture.

The team went 8-1 and lost in the CIF semifinals to Mojave.

"That was the first winning season in 17 years," Coach Mar says. We stand by the sideline. On the field, players tie shoes and get prepped for practice. "So, this whole program, man, I mean... I'm smiling dude. It's like the best feeling ever."

This season, the Huskies are 5-0 and rank 2nd in California's Central Section, according to MaxPreps.com.

Coach Mar likes to break his season into quarters. The Huskies just entered their second. This Friday at 7:00 p.m., the team squares up in an away match against their toughest opponent yet: the 4-1 Lone Pine.

"It's their homecoming, guys," Coach Mar says to his huddled team before practice starts. "That should make you angry."

Lone Pine is a huge game. "The way I see it - and I've been harping on my kids - we have to win this game," says Coach Mar. Because the winner gets home field advantage for the playoffs. "And, personally, up here at 8,000 feet... I mean, we

run everybody." The Huskies have been 14-2 in the last two years. Thin air and running hurry-up - that's a winning recipe.

"All the stands are filled now," Coach Mar says. He points to the bleachers that border the field. The small town, high school football team - it's something Coach Mar really believes in. "We got one team, one family. That's what we're trying to build here. And it's worked," the coach says.

Coach Mar doesn't hesitate to give credit where credit is due. He and his staff have taken the program, revived it, and changed the culture. But, he says, "Without our community, we're nothing."

The Huskies only have three seniors this year - Sam Boyer-see FOOTBALL, page 4



Jr. Taj Gray punts it proud in practice.

## WENTWORTH SEEKS THIRD TERM

By Crocetti

John Wentworth is a seasoned public servant for the town of Mammoth Lakes. He is one of 6 candidates running for one of Mammoth Town Council's 3 open positions in November, along with Betsy Truax, Cleland Hoff, Amanda Rice, Chris Bubser, and Seth Guthrie. He is the only incumbent councilmember running.

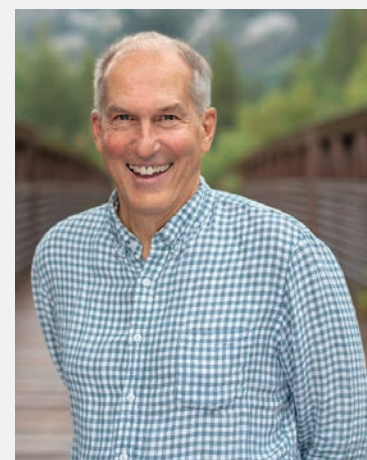
Wentworth came to California in 1983 to attend the American Film Institute. He then worked in Hollywood for 17 years, during which time he was the co-producer of the movies Mulholland Drive, Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me, and Blue Velvet, in addition to working as David Lynch's production assistant for the Twin Peaks television series.

"David is the funniest person you'll ever meet - a true artist," said Wentworth.

Wentworth grew up in Washington, D.C. and says he's a "refugee of the east coast." Surrounded by politics his entire upbringing, he took a hard left into the art world. "I grew up in politics. I grew up around policy. Both my father and my stepfather were journalists and my mother worked in the White House for a brief stint in the Reagan administration. So I was marinated in that culture. And then I took a much needed detour through the things that really matter in life: arts and culture," said Wentworth.

By 2000, Wentworth decided that he wanted a change from the hustle and bustle of Hollywood. Since he'd been skiing since he was four years old and frequented Mammoth Mountain often, he decided to move to Mammoth on July 4, 2000.

He became involved in



Mammoth politics in 2006. "For me, the inciting incident had to do with public access to the Sherwins in 2006; it happened when the town decided that it was a good idea to build a private gate on a public road to try to manage backcountry skiing access to the Sherwins. The neighborhood out there didn't like visitors traversing through that area, so they decided to go ahead and just put a private gate on a public road."

Wentworth fought for the public's right to access the Sherwins through the road and won.

The situation kicked off Wentworth's founding of MLTPA, or the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation.

Wentworth worked to build MLTPA from 2006 until 2014. During that time, Mammoth completed planning for the entire Sherwins area and got a new trail system master plan completed for the town. MLTPA also led the campaign to create and pass Measure R and Measure U, two special tax measures devoted to recreation, mobility and arts and culture in Mammoth. Since these tax measures were established,

see WENTWORTH, page 6

All politics = national	Nash to build bridges?	Most, not all	XC results	Bunker mentality
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# CROSS COUNTRY: BISHOP VS. MAMMOTH



Mammoth, Bishop and Lee Vining line up for the boys race



Sierra Wight (L) and Tenaya Koegler (R) who came in first and second place, respectively

## WENTWORTH

continued from page 1

tens of millions of dollars have flowed into Mammoth, helping to create the Mammoth Lakes Trail System and Office of Outdoor Recreation.

In 2014, Wentworth decided to make his first run for Town Council and won. He was reelected in 2018.

Wentworth says that he hopes to maintain and enhance the momentum of the work he's done over the last eight years. "The first priority, obviously, is housing. But it's very important to know that we have a unique and very aggressive community housing program already underway. This is what we've been working on for at least the last four years. And I've been a member of the council that has put this program in place," he said.

Wentworth also highlighted the importance of him being re-elected as the only council member who votes on community housing: "When the council votes on these issues, there are only three of us voting on them. Because Bill Sauser and Sarah Rea have conflicts of interest. So it's just me and Lynda Salcido and Kirk Stapp. And Kirk isn't running again, and Lynda is leaving to become a Mono County Supervisor. I'm the only one running again. The need for my continuity in leadership cannot be overlooked. Frankly, it would be kind of irresponsible of me at this point to say, 'Oh, I'm just gonna walk away from this.' These are complicated programs. We're talking about tens of millions of dollars. The Parcel is about \$80 million, with the public money and grants coming from the town that we are investing in. It's the real deal. And I've been on this since the beginning. I think it's critically important that someone with my experience gets back on that council to maintain the continuity to keep this program moving forward."

On the topic of hiring the next Town Manager, Wentworth said that it needs to be "somebody with multidisciplinary experience; 75% of the land within our municipal boundary is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. We need somebody who understands the federal side of this- who understands the Forest Service, and who truly understands how federal agencies work. We're also going to need somebody who has an understanding and awareness of how to work regionally. The state of California is investing billions of dollars into rural parts of the state, so we need to have a Town Manager who knows how to work with other jurisdictions and counties in our region, to help acquire this money that could benefit our community. This Town Manager also needs to know about real estate development. They need to know about resort development. And they need to know about rural communities, and the needs of workforces and communities in rural areas that are dealing with the challenges of growth as a destination resort."

Wentworth went on to say that he has no specific names in mind of who this person should be, but that he sees no problem with looking outside of the Mammoth community during the hiring process. "We need to recruit nationally, even internationally, to bring to review and to interview a wide range of candidates, given the unique and compelling opportunities that are now here in Mammoth Lakes. Who knows, we may hire from within, we may hire from a neighboring county too. It could be somebody

The MHS and BUHS cross country teams (as well as one lone runner representing Lee Vining in the boys division) faced off in a race on Wednesday afternoon at Shady Rest Park in Mammoth.

MUHS took first place in both the boys and girls races. The Mammoth boys team beat Bishop by a mere one point, while the Mammoth girls team beat Bishop by default (Bishop didn't have at least 5 runners).

### RACE RESULTS

#### BOYS:

1. Dane Karch (MHS) 18.24
2. Alexander Adkins (BUHS) 18.36
3. Denzel Gomez (BUHS) 20.33
4. Blake Breaton (BUHS) 21.11
5. Jake McConnell (MHS) 21.44
6. Beckett Page (MHS) 22.05
7. Davin Wolter (MHS) 22.21
8. Alex Eide (BUHS) 22.25
9. Solomon (LVHS) 22.32
10. Mark McConnell (MHS) 22.35
11. Rider Pearce (MHS) 22.40
12. Noel Castellanos (MHS) 23.50
13. Josh Wilson (BUHS) 23.51
14. Rylan Nash (MHS) 24.04
15. Max Clark (MHS) 26.09
16. Caleb Fitt (BUHS) 32.17

#### GIRLS:

1. Sierra Wight (MHS) 22.37
2. Tenaya Koegler (MHS) 23.04
3. Audrey Cokely (BUHS) 25.52
4. Anywyn Benson (BUHS) 26.28
5. McKenna Smith (MHS) 27.41
6. Lana Sugimura (MHS) 28.38
7. Cameron Moxley (MHS) 31.20
8. Yasmine Martinez (MHS) 31.56

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# NASH SEEKS SCHOOL BOARD TRANSPARENCY

The former teacher and parent of three throws her hat into the MUSD election ring

By Pike

Chelsea Nash is one of eight candidates running for MUSD's board this fall. The list includes Gloria Diaz, Jeff Ronci, John Stavlo, Cindie Wormhoudt, Amanda Pelham, Marty Thompson, and Becky Davis. There are two vacancies that need to be filled.

Chelsea Nash is a Mammoth High School alumnus. She grew up here. Went to UC Santa Barbara for undergrad (sociology and health sciences) and then graduate school, earning a multi-subject teaching credential and a master's degree in education.

"I have taught in second grade, fourth grade, and I've substituted quite a bit in kindergarten and other grade levels," says Nash. She was active in the classroom for two years. Then, she moved back to Mammoth and worked in the restaurant industry for about a decade. Mostly serving, sometimes bartending, occasionally catering.

For the past five years, Nash has primarily been at home with her three, MUSD-enrolled kids. One's in high school, and two are in elementary school. "I've attended most of the school board meetings for the past three and a half years," Nash says. She's watched from the perspective of being a parent and having a background in education. And, she's frustrated.

"I think there's a loss of connection with our school community," Nash says. "And in losing connection, I think there's been a loss of trust and faith."

The Brown Act limits the amount of communication a board can have with its community.



"[Board members] are not allowed to directly comment when parents are speaking at public comment and things like that," says Nash. "But, I also feel like it's important for the board to find a way to communicate better with our community within the parameters of the Brown Act."

Some of Nash's ideas include expanding the publicly released board agendas, drafting more specific board meeting minutes, and making those minutes more readily available to the public.

"I also think the board could better advertise to parents and stakeholders when their meetings are happening," Nash says. This is the first year Nash has noticed the elementary school's Monday Messenger mention the date and time of the next school board meeting.

Nash has both good and bad things to say about former superintendent Wild-

man, who resigned in July.

The positive: Wildman brought in Michelle McMillian as Mammoth Elementary School principal. Nash thinks McMillian has had an extraordinarily positive influence on the elementary school and the district as a whole.

The negative: a lack of transparency. "I think she failed to make her staff feel that their experiences and their opinions were important to her," says Nash. "I think she really kind of lost track and lost sight of putting our students first and made decisions based on fear of the unknown." Nash thinks COVID school closures went on too long, and that Wildman didn't consider the school closure ramifications for students from abusive households or households without enough food.

The new superintendent, Nash thinks, needs to be a collaborative, transparent, and communicative leader. "Ultimately, our next superintendent really needs to focus on the well-being of our students, and their education and their academic success," says Nash.

Nash also thinks teachers need to be supported if MUSD hopes to repair the learning deficit that COVID caused. "They're the ones working directly with the students," says Nash. "And when they come to the board or the superintendent or their site administrators and say, 'This is what I need, I think we need to listen and try to do our absolute best to support them.'"

If there were another pandemic, Nash would want to be in close contact with the superintendent. She'd want to know what the health department is recommending, and what they are requiring. She'd want to have a finger on the pulse of campus staffing.

Keeping students in school would be her priority.

When it comes to raising test scores, Nash believes offering more professional development for teachers could help. Send them to more innovative learning conferences. Give them an extra body in the classroom.

"Offering tutoring to students who are identified as struggling is also really important," says Nash.

As for providing campus security while keeping the community and school connected, Nash says, "It's a fine balance. You don't want our schools to feel like prisons, and you want to invite parents on campus to volunteer as much as possible and make them feel welcome."

## WENTWORTH

continued from page 6

from anywhere. But we are in a position to absolutely triple down on the value and the future of this community. This is our time, this is our moment. And we have to step up to it."

When asked about the Community Recreation Center (CRC) currently being built, Wentworth says that the project is justified, despite its hefty price tag of around \$15 million. "When you look at it right now, it looks like a mess. But that's not how it's going to stay. I've supported the CRC all the way through; we first looked into just putting a roof on the existing ice rink, but after looking at the numbers in cost for doing so, it wasn't that cheap. The town also doesn't even own the land that that rink was on. To be responsible with taxpayer money, why would we spend millions of dollars to build a piece of infrastructure on land that we don't own? So we decided, we're going to move this ice rink to Mammoth Creek Park West. Then we decided that it made sense to raise the bar by making it a year-round facility; we have camps all summer long with thousands of kids. We chose to make a sprung structure because it was cheaper and still served the municipal purpose of the building. We also couldn't foresee Covid-19 and its supply chain/construction nightmares all over the world. At the end of the day, in 2023, we're going to open up that facility. And if we had said, 'we're going to spend \$20 million and we're going to do sticks and bricks,' it would have cost twice as much."

Wentworth concluded the interview by saying, "The thing to keep in mind is that the amount of money that flows through the town on an annual basis is a significant number. We're talking about \$85 million a year that flows through the budget of a town of 8,000 people. Who are the three people, of the six candidates running, who have the experience, the background and the judgment to lead an organization with approximately an \$85 million worth of money flowing through it? There are 3 spots. 6 candidates. Really think about it. Who are the three people that we as a community want to see working with Bill and Sarah for the next two years? That is the question."

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