



August 21, 2003

Boneyard Sale Success

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN, CA – The conditions were near perfect for boneyard shopping at Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) last Saturday, August 16th. Around 70 people turned out to browse through piles of ski area scrap in search of whatever interesting or useful items they could buy and haul away. In all, about 20 tons of scrap materials were sold, and despite the very reasonable prices, a profit of close to \$2,000 was made in benefit of the Mammoth Lakes Friends of the Library. “It’s an awesome donation and we’re extremely appreciative to be selected as the benefactor of the sale. It will buy lots of books for all the children of Mono County,” said Liz Fleming, local treasurer for the Friends of the Library.

The ‘Art from Scrap’ benefit sale was organized by MMSA and Clark Contemporary Gallery to offer a unique opportunity for artisans and residents alike to search through the resort’s outside material storage area (a.k.a. the boneyard) in hopes of finding items they could use elsewhere. “It’s is an untapped gold mine of ideas and inexpensive resources. These are things you can’t find in an industrial scrap yard,” said gallery owner and sculptor Rebecca Clark. In fact, the sale idea grew from a recent gallery showing of large-scale metal sculptures made from materials similar to those cached in the boneyard. Lisa Isaacs, MMSA’s Environmental Programs Manager, worked with Clark to secure permission and oversee the event, joined by Environmental staff members and a crew from Mammoth’s Outside Operations who spent the day assisting with the sale. “The crew was fantastic. I think they started the day with some skepticism, but by the end they were amazed at the turnout and the sheer tonnage sold,” Clark noted.

“The sale went very well,” said Isaacs. “Everyone had fun, we made a lot of people happy, and we took in more money than expected. What more can you ask?” Many locals attended the sale, with some of the largest purchases by MLPD Sergeant Paul Dostie, who plans to use the materials at his local ranch, and Stan Zielinski, who generously added \$100 on top of his large purchase in support of the Friends of the Library. Bishop-area ranch owners Chuck and Roxanne Tallman also donated an additional \$100 to the “very worthy cause.” The largest purchase, however, was made by George and Ueli Crezee, who drove up from Big Bear with a trailer in tow specifically for the sale. In addition to purchasing a notorious old gondola car that saw heavy action in a past employee sled race running under the name of “Ueli’s Kids,” the Crezee’s went home with 24 chairs and other interesting scraps destined for a new life as metal artwork. But no one bought the cantaloupe launcher, secretly making Greg Bretz very happy.

Unbeknownst to many, Mammoth’s outside storage area is not unique. All ski areas have “boneyards” of some shape and size, as do other large-scale outside operators, including the Forest Service. Typically,

these areas are used to store non-hazardous, non-reactive materials that are common to the company and can be used again, like metal railings, stairways, doors, grates, pipes and pipe fittings, as well as other scraps that can be used for different purposes. Many crafted fittings designed for new and remodeled facilities throughout Mammoth's resort properties are made out of materials gleaned from the piles. A large, well appointed welding and fabrication shop at Mammoth's garage facility is dedicated to doing just that. However, the boneyard has never been open to the public for non-company purposes. "I haven't heard of any ski area ever doing this before and I think it's a great idea," said Geraldine Link, Director of Public Policy for the National Ski Areas Association. Noting that Mammoth's outside storage has been the target of a clean-up campaign for the past few years, Dennis Agee, General Manager of MMSA's Outside Operations, explained, "The sale fits in perfectly with our efforts to clean up the area and our commitment to community values."

While sale organizers can't say whether Mammoth will hold an annual scrap sale, a juried exhibition of art made from boneyard pieces is planned for next summer. "We look forward to seeing what creations come from our cooperative efforts," said Clark with Isaacs adding, "as long as it doesn't end up back in the boneyard!"

