



Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe

NUMA NEWS

May 2026

5th Annual Autism Awareness Walk/Run

Saturday, April 18, 2026 at
the Pyramid Lake Museum
and Visitor Center.



walk



To receive this newsletter,
please contact
Administrative Assistant
Michelle Mix at:
(775) 574-1000 ext. 1102
Or by e-mail:
adminassistant@plpt.nsn.us



#JUSTICE FOR ANNA SCOTT



Anna Marie Scott was brutally murdered on February 3, 2022. She was shot, her body then stuffed into her car, which was set on fire on I-580 Southbound at the Galena Creek Bridge. She was a mother of two, a sister, a daughter, a granddaughter, a cousin, a friend – she was our relative.

As of May 3, 2026, her murderers continue to remain free.

If you know something, SAY SOMETHING.

Anyone with information should contact the Washoe County Sheriff's Office Detective Division at (775) 328-3320 or Secret Witness at (775) 322-4900. Refer to case #WC22-563.

Secret Witness is now offering a \$5,000 reward for information leading to an arrest in the death of Anna Marie Scott.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER

MENS

3-ON-3

WOMENS

BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Supporting a Life-Saving Kidney Transplant

I need to raise \$3,000 – \$5,000 for a life-saving kidney transplant.
Please join me for this special event!



**SATURDAY
MAY 30**



**ENTRY FEE
\$250 PER TEAM**

HOW YOU CAN HELP:



FORM A TEAM



MAKE A DONATION



SPREAD THE WORD

HIGHLIGHTS:



Reversible Jerseys
for the First 6 Teams to Pay in Full



Letterman Jackets
for the Championship Team



Come Out & Support a Great Cause!

FOR MORE INFO:

775-467-6425

Call or Text Aimee Johnson

Held at the Walker River Schurz Tribal Gym

Agai Dicutta Gymnasium

1127 Cottonwood Dr. Schurz, NV 89427

GAMES START AT 11:00 A.M.

Let's make this a tournament to remember! ♥



Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe

Post Office Box 256
 Nixon, Nevada 89424
 Telephone: (775) 574-1000
 Fax (775) 574-1008

April 10, 2026

ATTENTION:

The Nixon Tribal Court will be closed every Wednesday until further notice.

For emergency actions or temporary restraining orders, please call (775) 515-5318.



Join ITCN WIC today and start receiving benefits!
 If you care for a child, you may qualify

NIXON

Wednesday, May 6th, 2026 - 10:00am - 2:00pm

**Pyramid Lake Tribal Administration Building
 208 Capitol Hill, Nixon, NV 89442**

Why WIC?

- Healthy food benefits
- Nutrition counseling
- Breastfeeding support
- Formula assistance
- Referrals to helpful services
- Child feeding & prenatal guidance

Who is Eligible?

- Pregnant women
- Breastfeeding women
- Postpartum women (up to 6 months)
- Fathers, grandparents, foster parents & guardians
- Infants & children under 5

You may qualify if you receive:
 TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, or participate in Food Distribution on Tribal Lands.

INCOME GUIDELINES

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	GROSS MONTHLY INCOME
1	\$2,413
2	\$3,261
3	\$4,109
4	\$4,957
5	\$5,805
6	6,653
7	\$7,501
8	\$8,349

CONTACT US



Phone: (775) 398-4960
 Fax: (775) 355-5217
 Email: wic@itcn.org

[@itcn_wic](https://www.instagram.com/itcn_wic) [itcnwic.org](https://www.facebook.com/itcnwic.org)
 Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada WIC

This institution is an equal opportunity provider

OFFICE LOCATIONS

- 📍 Sparks Office: 910 Roberta Lane, Sparks, NV 89431
- 📍 Elko Office: 1523 Shoshone Circle, Elko, NV 89801
- 📍 Las Vegas Office: 2920 S Rainbow Blvd Suite 160, Las Vegas, NV 89146

We offer remote appointments too!

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe

**MMIP Solidarity Walk 10:00 am
 Social Pow-Wow 12:00pm
 Saturday May 9, 2026**

All Drums & Dancers Welcomed

**Door Prizes
 Cake Walk**

Event Sponsored by:
 PL Victim Services (775)575-9444
 PLPT Museum (775)574-1088
 If you have any questions please contact one of the above.

**Walk will begin at Pyramid Lake Jr./Sr. High School
 Conclusion at Nixon Gym
 Lunch will be served**

Social Pow-Wow

- Host Drum: Echo Sky
- Owl Dance Special
PLPT Museum
- Mother's Day Dance
- Memorial Specials
- All Specials Welcomed

Special Presentations

- Ben Rupert-Dance
- Guest Speakers
- Information Booths

All Vendors Welcome

Vendor Cost: \$25

Honoring our relatives, Past, Present & Future.

Provided by PLPT Victim Services and 15JOVW-23-GG-02810-RURA. OVW Fiscal Year 2023 Rural Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program - Solicitation15JOVW-23-GG-04446-SASP OVW Fiscal Year 2023 Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program

— NUMU YADOOANA —

**LUNCH AND LEARN
 PAIUTE CLASS**



Reynelda James

Language Teacher/
 Elder

Every Tuesday 12:00 pm at Modular 102
 next to Nixon Gym
 Meal Provided

PYRAMID LAKE

NIXON, NEVADA

JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

THE OPPORTUNITY – Pyramid Lake Jr./Sr. High School is seeking a Principal to lead a small, community-centered school grounded in strong relationships and a commitment to Culture, College, and Career readiness. Under the direction of the School Board, the Principal serves as the administrative head of the school, responsible for coordinating and overseeing all educational activities. This role provides leadership, guidance, and overall supervision of staff, students, families, and the community to achieve the school's mission. The ideal candidate will be a collaborative, student-centered leader who embraces culturally responsive practices and values community partnership in a rural setting.

ABOUT US

Pesa Awamoo'a!

Pyramid Lake Jr./Sr. High School is a close-knit, student-centered learning community where strong relationships, academic growth, and cultural identity are at the heart of everything we do. We are deeply committed to preparing students for success through a balanced focus on Culture, College, and Career readiness.

Our school emphasizes the integration of Indigenous knowledge and traditions within a rigorous academic program. Students are supported in achieving success on End-of-Course exams, ACT and SAT assessments, and in pursuing post-secondary pathways including college, military service, and career training. Through our JumpStart partnership with Truckee Meadows Community College, students have the opportunity to graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate degree.

We take pride in expanding extracurricular opportunities and course offerings to meet the diverse interests and goals of our students. At Pyramid Lake Jr./Sr. High School, educators, families, and community members work together to create a supportive environment where every student is encouraged to engage, grow, and thrive.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Holds, or is eligible to hold, a Nevada school administrator endorsement.

A Master's Degree in School Administration or related field.

Must have at least three (3) years of classroom teaching experience, preferably at the secondary level.

At least four (4) years of administrative experience and two (2) years of grant management experience.

A minimum of two (2) years of leadership at the school site level as an assistant principal or principal; preferably at the secondary level.

Holds, or is eligible to hold, a Nevada driver's license.

Be First Aid/CPR certified, or the ability to obtain certification.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

Experience with management of a Bureau of Indian Education School.

SEARCH TIMELINE

- Closing Date for Applications: **05.01.26**
- School Board Selects Finalists: **TBD**
- Interviews with School Board: **TBD**
- Start Date: **07.01.26**

SALARY RANGE

\$91,711 – \$147,169

+

COMPETITIVE BENEFITS

+

195 Day Calendar + Activities

Pyramid Lake School

711 State Street

Nixon, Nevada 89424

(775) 574-1037

Pyramidlakeschools.com

Apply at

Moderneducatehr.com

WE ARE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR

PRINCIPAL

Search Consultants

Keith Lewis
(775) 443-5451

Dr. David Jensen
(775) 220-9863

SEARCH CONDUCTED BY



MODERNEUCATEHR.COM
(775) 443-5451





Nevada Social Security Office Update

The operational status of your local office, card center, or hearing office in Nevada has changed.

[Check Status](#)

You may not need to visit an office. Did you know that you can handle a lot of your business with us online?

Popular Online Services



Review Your Information
Your Latest Statement
Your Earnings History
Estimate Retirement Benefits
Check Application Status



Apply for Benefits
Retirement Benefits
Disability Benefits
Medicare Benefits
Appeal Medical Decision



Manage Your Account
Change Your Address
Set Up or Change Direct Deposit
Print Proof of Benefits
Print Your 1099



Find Help and Answers
Review Our FAQs
Request a Replacement Medicare Card
Request a Replacement Social Security Card

From the Enrollment Office - Nevada Social Security Office Update. You may not need to visit an office. Did you know that you can handle a lot of your business with us online?

The operational status of your local office, card center or hearing office in Nevada has changed.

Follow the link here to see if your state's offices are open: https://www.ssa.gov/agency/emergency/?utm_campaign=emergencypage&utm_content=ctabtn&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#N

“MOVEMENT IS MEDICINE”

All Ages Fun Run/Walk

Saturday, September 12, 2026

(in conjunction with the Sacred Visions Pow Wow)

7 a.m. registration, 8 a.m. run/walk



3 AGE CATEGORIES
MEN & WOMEN COMBINED
BOYS & GIRLS COMBINED:

- ELDERS 65+
- ADULTS 18-64
- YOUTH 17 and under



Sponsored by: Pesa Kwetso'ino and Native Works
Call 775-224-2964 or 775-481-3219 for more information

**VENDOR APPLICATIONS
NOW BEING ACCEPTED**

**2026 SACRED VISIONS POW WOW
SEPTEMBER 11-13, 2026
WADSWORTH, NV**

**PLEASE CONTACT:
BRIAN WADSWORTH
SACRED VISIONS POW WOW CHAIRMAN
(775) 335-6773
BWADSWORTH787@GMAIL.COM**

The planning for the 2026 Sacred Visions Pow Wow is underway! We have the vendor applications now available! Please contact Sacred Visions Pow Wow Chairman, Brian Wadsworth, for a copy of the application. Copies will also be available at the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Office in Nixon.

Thank you Pesa Kwetso'ino and Native Works for hosting the Fun Run/Walk on Saturday, September 12, at the 15th Annual Sacred Visions Pow Wow!

Pyramid Lake Museum and Visitor Center, April 17, 2026:

We are pleased to report that the carpet installation is advancing according to plan, and we look forward to unveiling the final outcome.





If you are age 18 by **June 30, 2026, and on the approved list of eligible Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal members per Resolution PL#34-18, then you are eligible to apply for the Minor's Trust.** (See Resolution on our website at plpt.nsn.us/enrollment). This is for those enrolled as a Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal member and living as of April 6, 2018/December 6, 2024.)

- Minors will have up to six years to complete their forms and claim their economic stimulus payment. The deadline to submit your forms for this 2nd Quarter of 2026 is on the last Tuesday of June 2026. Applications received by 06/30/2026 will be processed and forwarded to the Trust the next business day.
- Tribal members under the age of 18 will have their economic stimulus payment placed in a trust account to be managed by the Trust until they reach 18 years of age.
 - Members who will receive their payment from the Minor's Trust can expect distributions within 4 months after the end of the calendar quarter (March, June, September, or December) after they return the completed and signed application.
 - Members who have an account in the Minor's Trust will have six years to claim their economic stimulus payment, from the date of their 18th birthday.
- For more information on the 2018 Economic Distribution Minors' Trust, please see our website at: plpt.nsn.us/Enrollment

****June 2, 2025: For those who have turned 18 after December 6, 2024, your 2024 Christmas Distribution Funds were placed into the trust, so you will have to follow these guidelines to obtain your funds.**

1. Funds will be received at least 4 months after quarter deadline. Please plan accordingly.
2. All Minors' Applications are processed at the same time – turning in a form earlier than the deadline doesn't ensure a faster result.

NOTE: **You may turn in your form earlier, but it will be held until the appropriate Quarter Deadline your birthday falls under.**

3. The whole process goes from receiving and verifying your information with our PLPT Enrollment office, which includes verifying Enrollment numbers, social security numbers and updated addresses. The paperwork is then submitted to the Trust Company, where it is then processed. The Trust Company then submits their completed forms to the Bank, and after verification with the bank, your money will THEN be distributed – this sometimes takes up to 4 MONTHS. Please plan accordingly, and expect that your money will arrive 4 MONTHS **after** the Quarter Deadline.
4. The Trust company will contact the PLPT office for more information according to their standards – your contact information needs to be legible just in case we need to reach you. If you can't be reached, your form will be held until you contact us.

PYRAMID LAKE HOUSING AUTHORITY



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Posted: April 16, 2026

Closing Date: May 1, 2026

POSITION: Housing Services Specialist

LOCATION: Pyramid Lake Housing Authority

SUPERVISOR: Executive Director

SALARY: \$20.14 - \$22.21 Per Hour, Full-Time Status, 40 hours per week
Class Code 312/Grade 10, Steps 8-10 Non-Exempt

DEFINITION: Monitors lease compliance for all residents under Homeownership and Low Rental programs. Serves as the primary contact for housing assistance and provides customer service to applicants, occupants, and potential tenants.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Process all incoming applicants for Homeownership and Low Rental programs, following established guidelines and regulations.

Receive and review applications for program eligibility.

Provide adequate explanation to new residents of their rights and responsibilities as outlined in the Homebuyer Agreement or Tenant Lease Agreement. Calculate monthly payments for homebuyers and rental tenants. Perform annual reexamination of family earnings and composition.

Ensure that all units under management of the Housing Authority are properly maintained in accordance with established housing policies and HUD guidelines and regulations. Conduct inspections at move-in, move-out, warranty and annual periods, and document all findings.
Prepare maintenance work orders for routine, preventative, and emergency needs.

Conduct all Interim/Annual re-certifications. Complete the determination of initial/continued occupancy eligibility and compute the required payment of each tenant on the basis of information received from acceptable sources.

Prepare and submit written reports of program activities to the Housing Director and Board of Commissioners on a monthly basis. Attend board meetings to present the monthly report and answer questions.

Provide information sessions for new participants including general maintenance programs, energy conservation, fire safety, and insurance programs.

Process incoming requests from outside agencies, verify data maintained in the participant file.
Assist in collection efforts as outlined in the Housing Authority's Collection and Eviction Policy

Refer applicants and participants to alternative resources as needed.

P.O. BOX 210 NIXON, NV 89424-0210 Ph 775.574.1026 Fax 775.574.1044



Pyramid Lake Housing Authority is looking for a Housing Services Specialist. Application period will close May 1, 2026.

Please see their website for a full description at: <https://plhousingauthority.weebly.com/>

Applications can be found on PLHA website or picked up in office.

Job Description : Monitors lease compliance for all residents under Homeownership and Low Rental programs. Serves as the primary contact for housing assistance and provides customer service to applicants, occupants and potential tenants.

Contact Pyramid Lake Housing Authority for more information at (775) 574-1026.

Recruiting

The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe is posting for 1 vacancy on the **Public Utilities District Board**.

Applications are available online at plpt.nsn.us/Applications&Forms, or at the Tribal Admin Office.

Deadline to apply is: **May 6, 2026 at 4:30 pm.**

Candidates must be a Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal member who is a resident of Wadsworth, Sutcliffe or Nixon.

The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe is currently recruiting for 1 vacancy on the **Economic Development Committee**.

Members are appointed by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council. The committee meets quarterly or as needed.

Duties include:

- Review applications for economic development funding: make recommendations to the Tribal Council regarding funding decisions according to the Pyramid Lake Economic Development Plan.
- Develop an investment plan for the Pyramid Lake Economic Development Fund.
- Work with consultants and the Federal Government to manage the investment plan.
- Develop and submit annual reports to the Tribal Council on the status of the fund.
- Review and recommend to Tribal Council amendments to the plan.
- Other duties as established by the Tribal Council.

Applications are available online at plpt.nsn.us/Applications&Forms, or at the Tribal Admin Office.

Deadline to apply is: **May 15, 2026 at 4:30 pm.**

Please send your committee application to:

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
ATTN: Tribal Secretary
PO Box 256
Nixon, NV 89424

Join Us!



2026 Tribal Summit on Age- and Dementia-Friendly Care

Summit Theme:

**“Medicine:
Traditional Healing
Meets Clinical Care”**

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Nixon, NV

TribalSummitADFC.org

Hosted by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe's Pesa Sooname Advisory Group (Dementia Friendly Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe) and the UNR Dementia Engagement, Education, and Research (DEER) Program

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL!



Questions? Contact:

Casey Venturini
Casey.V@unr.edu
(775) 682-8765

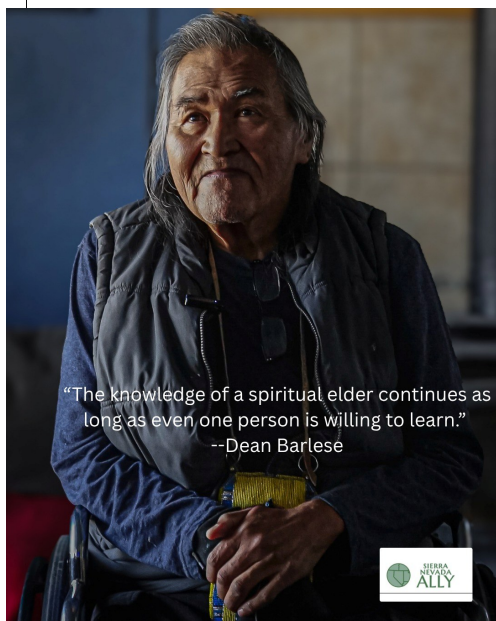
This project is partially supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of UNLV's NIHAN grant award #U1QHP53032 totaling \$5 million with 0% of the federal award financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

Who Controls the West: Prayer on Trial

Legal battles over Thacker Pass are over—but Paiute elder Dean Barlese’s fight to protect sacred sites goes on.

This story is part of an ongoing series, Who Controls the West, which examines the people, companies and organizations that make decisions over how land and resources are used across the American West. Have ideas for the series? Email editor@sierranevadaally.org.

By Hannah Truby. March 22, 2026



On a spring afternoon at his home on the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe reservation in Nixon, Nev., Paiute spiritual elder Dean Barlese tells me he’s grown used to journalists showing up at his door.

“It’s good,” he said. “It gets the word out.”

On what exactly? I asked.

“Well, it starts with the protest—for the lithium mine, how we got sued. There’s a paper they gave to us—under the hat over there, that big pile of paper.”

Beneath the hat sits a thick stack of legal documents he was served after protesting at the Thacker Pass lithium mine construction site several years ago.

“And they’re saying, if we do it again, we’ll get sued again,” he said—and with a chuckle added, “They can take my old vintage cast iron. That’s probably the one thing I’ve got.”

We sit in his living room, which looks out onto the farm plots of his neighbors, with Pyramid Lake just beyond view to the north. Barlese grew up on this land, later inheriting the property from his grandparents. The house is both his home and the center of operations

for the Pyramid Lake Spiritual Healing Center.

As a Northern Paiute spiritual elder, Barlese has devoted his life to preserving and sharing his people’s cultural teachings. At the Healing Center, he leads sweat lodge ceremonies, prayer circles, and healing sessions, offering spiritual guidance and traditional medicines—sometimes hosting as many as 50 people in his home.

“A lot of times they have sickness, disease,” he said. “They just want some kind of medicine or prayer to help them feel better. We deal with several women with cancer. We pray, help them, and share medicine with them.”

At 68, Barlese continues this work even from a wheelchair after losing his right foot to complications from diabetes. But in recent months, his home has drawn a different kind of visitor: journalists like myself, eager to meet the tribe’s sole spiritual elder and one of the “Thacker Pass Six.”

In 2023, Barlese was among scores of Native and allied land protectors on the frontlines at Thacker Pass. With his face painted red and a sacred pipe in hand, he positioned his wheelchair in the path of pipelines being installed by Lithium Americas for what would become a large-scale lithium mine.

“People have lost connection to what we hold sacred and dear. They’ve lost sight. They don’t think about their grandkids, their great-grandkids. What are we leaving them?” he pauses before adding, “Maybe I’ll die doing this work, but I’ll give my life to protect our ancestral areas.”

For Barlese, spiritual work often involves advocacy, whether for people or the environment, but none have been as fraught—or as symbolic—as Thacker Pass.

Peehee Mu’huh: A Sacred Site, A Strategic Resource

Thacker Pass—an expansive plateau 60 miles northwest of Winnemucca, just south of the Oregon border—sits atop one of North America’s largest lithium deposits, making it a prime target for developers seeking a domestic supply of the critical metal.

Continued on page 13

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved a large-scale lithium mine at Peehee Mu’huh. Now under construction, with Phase 1 expected to finish in late 2027, the Lithium Americas project will transform more than 17,000 acres into an industrial extraction zone, including a two-square-mile open pit. The mine is projected to produce about 40,000 metric tons of battery-grade lithium carbonate each year for 85 years.

Government and industry officials present the project as crucial for reducing reliance on foreign lithium and strengthening domestic supply chains, and in October 2024 the Department of Energy backed it with more than \$2 billion in federal loans. General Motors has entered into an agreement that allows the automaker to “purchase up to 100% of production volumes from Phase 1 and up to 38% of total production volumes of Thacker Pass for 20 years.”

But for the Paiute people, this land is not just a resource to be extracted—it is the site of great cultural significance. Known as Peehee Mu’huh, or “Rotten Moon,” it is named for a massacre recounted by elders, in which dozens of Paiute men, women, and children were killed by an enemy tribe. Barlese’s great-great-grandfather lived here and resisted settler encroachment before being forced south; the site remains a vital part of Paiute history.

“There was a massacre of men, women, and children there in 1865 during the Snake War,” said Barlese. “A lot of massacres happened during that time because the government wanted us annihilated. It was a war of genocide, really.”

From Ceremony to Courtroom

In July 2021, several tribal nations—including the Reno Sparks Indian Colony, Burns Paiute Tribe, and Atsa Koodakuh wyh Nuwu (People of Red Mountain)—sued the U.S. government and the BLM. They argued that the agency had failed to provide meaningful consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act and contested claims that the open-pit mine site was the actual massacre location. Federal courts, including U.S. District Judge Miranda Du, rejected the tribes’ claims, finding the evidence insufficient to halt construction or archaeological work and that the BLM had acted in good faith. (Though in August 2022, the BLM would acknowledge the 1865 massacre of Paiute people at Thacker Pass—more than a year after tribal leaders first raised the issue.)

Meanwhile, protests at the site grew. Organizers estimated that nearly a thousand people visited Thacker Pass during the summer of 2021, as Native land defenders and allies established prayer camps and held ceremonies intended to delay construction.

Their presence became the centerpiece of a civil lawsuit filed by Lithium Nevada Corporation, the entity pursuing legal action in connection with Thacker Pass, accusing Barlese and six others of trespass, nuisance, and interference with business operations.

Supporters of the protestors have described the company’s lawsuit as a SLAPP, suggesting it was intended to intimidate community voices and discourage participation in prayer and ceremony at Thacker Pass. (Read Lithium Americas’ response to research on SLAPPs).

In court, Native prayer and ceremony were framed not as protected tradition or peaceful protest, but as trespass. Even so, Barlese told the Las Vegas Review-Journal that defending ancestral lands—particularly those beyond reservation boundaries and increasingly threatened by development—remains a responsibility he cannot set aside.

What the Land Holds

To “speak for the animals, the plants, the four-legged”, Barlese said, has long been a part of Paiute identity and responsibility, and regardless of government claims, it is his people who remain the land’s caretakers.

This is especially true at Thacker Pass, where the land is under unprecedented pressure. The lithium extracted here is destined for batteries in electric cars and electronics—a development proponents say is essential for cutting greenhouse gas emissions and advancing clean energy—but the project consumes vast amounts of water, diesel, and chemicals, and threatens the habitats of species such as golden eagles, pronghorn antelope, and greater sage-grouse.

“Besides being a massacre site, there’s so much medicine there—herbs, roots, food. And they’re destroying everything,” he said. “I know technology can be good—I use a cell phone—but it’s also destructive. Nothing good can come of it.”

After the Case, the Responsibility Remains

By the end of 2023, the legal case against Barlese and the other land defenders was quietly resolved. It never went to trial, and the terms were not made public. Reporting and activist groups describe the resolution as a settlement, which allowed the defendants to avoid further legal risk—but it left broader questions of justice and the Paiute people’s spiritual stewardship unresolved.

Though he no longer visits Thacker Pass—he said seeing the devastation would be too painful—Barlese is neither bitter nor deterred, remaining steadfast in his mission.

Over the years, I've learned that my spiritual belief is what keeps me going," he said. "Otherwise I would've given up a long time ago. But I'm stubborn, and I'll be here for a long time teaching people, sharing everything I know."

Among his ongoing duties as elder, Barlese continues to document oral histories and maps sacred sites across northern Nevada and Oregon, preserving knowledge for younger generations.

"The knowledge of a spiritual elder continues as long as even one person is willing to learn," he said, noting a young man in the community has already expressed interest in following his path.



Trucks halted at the Ox Sam Camp at Thacker Pass in 2023. Photo by Bhie-Cie Zahn-Nahtzu.



Dean Barlese leads sweat lodge ceremonies at his home on the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation in Nixon, Nev. Photo by Hannah Truby / Sierra Nevada Ally

Barlese is also committed to repatriating human remains held in museums and universities, including collections at UC Berkeley. Returning these ancestors to their home land, he said, is another way of protecting the land and honoring Paiute tradition.

"It's a big responsibility to bring them back and rebury them, put them back in the ground where they belong," he said. They may be long gone, they may just be bones, but our tradition says we've got to take care of them. We always say we're walking on the dust of our ancestors. That's our connection to this land."

And, of course, the fight to steward the land and protect sacred sites remains far from over—and is not limited to Nevada.

The Bureau of Land Management has recently approved lithium exploration projects along the same McDermitt Caldera that the Thacker Pass project is part of, only further north in southeastern Oregon's. This includes new drill sites and access roads across public lands, signaling that development pressure is spreading.

Though the proposed sites are on public land, the region lies within the Northern Paiute's ancestral territory and retains deep cultural and spiritual significance—and Barlese intends to be there as well when construction officially begins.

"They're saying if we do it again, we'll get sued again. I'm not bitter. I'm not hateful. All I know is we will do it again."

For now, the court papers will serve as burn material in future sweat lodge ceremonies.



Author: Hannah Truby

Hannah Truby is a reporter, photographer, and managing editor at the Sierra Nevada Ally, specializing in long-form features and explanatory journalism. Her work explores the intersections of civil life, culture, and the environment, with a focus on human-centered, nuanced storytelling. She holds a Master's in Journalism from the University of Nevada, Reno, and a B.A. in English and German linguistics, bringing a deep reverence for language, culture and place to every story she tells.



PYRAMID LAKE
TRIBAL ENTERPRISES



Annual

FIREWORKS DEMO

5/16/26
SATURDAY

2500 LAKEVIEW DRIVE
SUTCLIFFE, NV 89510

FREE
Food
& Fun
FREE

MARINA STORE | BEGINS AT DUSK



Weather Permitting: Will not launch if raining.

Pyramid Lake JR/SR High School, April 20, 2026: Mr. Estrada's welding students have been hard at work, creating a new build for the baseball and softball field entrance. Great job bringing skill and craftsmanship to improve our campus!



Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe DEPARTMENT INFORMATION FAIR

Date: Saturday, 05/02/2026

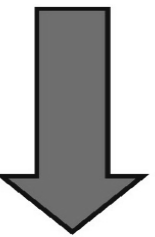
Time: 10:00 am—5:00 pm

Location: Nixon Gym



All Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal departments will be present to provide updates and information on what their departments are up to. Everyone is free to come up and ask questions in person of every department presenting.

- THERE WILL BE DOOR PRIZES!
- Community Survey available for a proposed 4/10 work week.
Come out and provide your input!



For more information, please call
(775) 574-1000