



Photographs by BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

EMILY MARKSTEIN, 31, who has a master's in historic preservation, lives in a 2006 GMC van in Mammoth Lakes.

PLENTY OF OPEN SPACE, BUT NOWHERE TO LIVE

In the Eastern Sierra, government agencies' large holdings leave little land for housing

By Jack Dolan | REPORTING FROM MAMMOTH LAKES

Emily Markstein, a sinewy rock climber and skier who has spent seven years living and working in the Sierra resort town of Mammoth Lakes, opens a large sliding door and welcomes a stranger into her home.

One of the gleaming multimillion-dollar mansions nestled among towering pine trees and granite peaks in this exclusive mountain enclave? Not exactly.

Markstein, who has a master's degree in historic preservation and has coached skiing, taught yoga, trimmed trees and waited tables at one of the fanciest restaurants in town, lives in a 2006 GMC van.

Like countless other adventure seekers drawn to California's rugged and remote Eastern Sierra, Markstein, 31, initially embraced "van life" after scrolling through social media posts that made it look carefree and glamorous. She continues because she genuinely likes it, she said, but also because, [See Space, A6]



MARKSTEIN'S description of "van life" often circles back to plumbing. "During COVID, I was showering in the creek," she said.

Refinery closure means more gas imports

After Phillips shuts down Wilmington-Carson complex, state may need to double its foreign purchases.

By Russ Mitchell

California for decades produced enough gasoline to supply almost all of its own needs, but the era of self-sufficiency is coming quickly to an end.

The Phillips 66 refinery complex in Wilmington and Carson now produces 1.3 billion gallons of gasoline annually, which will leave a huge gap to be filled after its planned closure late next year. With no pipelines into the state, and no plans to add new refineries, California will need to make up for the deficit with imports via ocean tanker — in what analysts say will be a costly endeavor, and one with inherent risks of supply disruptions.

"This is going to make California even more dependent on a longer supply chain. Not only will we see average upward pressure on prices, but probably volatility to prices as well," said Skip York, chief energy strategist for industry consultant Turner, Mason & Co.

California imports about 11 billion gallons of gasoline annually, or 8% of its supply, [See Refinery, A10]

Latino vote in California could tip balance of power

Districts with notable populations may help decide which party will control Congress.

By Andrea Castillo

On a recent Tuesday in Sacramento, Alexa Sosa Nunez put in her AirPods, stacked her printed script and took a deep breath before she dialed her first call

on behalf of Democratic congressional candidate Rudy Salas.

The 50-year-old woman who answered the phone said immigration is her top priority this election.

Sosa Nunez, who works for the voter mobilization group Communities for a New California Action Fund, told her that Salas supports a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers. Salas is running against Republican Rep. David Val-

adao for control of California's 22nd Congressional District in the San Joaquin Valley.

"Can we count on your vote?" she asked.

"Oh yeah," the woman replied. "I have family that — they need something. We need to do something so they can get papers here."

Some of California's most competitive congressional races are in districts with significant Latino population. [See Latino, A7]

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Israeli strikes on Iran limited

Tehran downplays damage and hasn't vowed to respond amid warnings of escalation. WORLD, A3

Showcasing L.A. for the Olympics

The Times asked 11 public intellectuals for their takes on what really defines the city. CALIFORNIA, B1

13 haunts to visit all year round

For fans, there's just one problem with Halloween season: It ends. Here's where its spirit lives on. WEEKEND, L1

Weather Clouds and sun. L.A. Basin: 78/60. B10

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MICHAEL BLACKSHIRE Los Angeles Times

A MAN named Michelangelo prepares to cross a street near Yoshinoya in the MacArthur Park area.

Drug use, violence surround restaurant

Workers struggle with safety and city inaction at 'Yoshinoya Alley'

STEVE LOPEZ

In one sense, the Yoshinoya Japanese Kitchen across the street from MacArthur Park couldn't be in a better location.

Thousands of potential customers stream by each day on foot, headed to and from work, home, shopping,



school and the Metro station.

In another sense, it couldn't be in a worse location. The fentanyl epidemic is often literally at its doorstep, along with the same raft of public safety issues that prompted the exasperated owner of nearby Langer's Delicatessen to tell me in August that he was thinking of shutting down after 77 years in business. [See Lopez, A8]

If Trump does return, he'll bring a list of once-unthinkable 'firsts'

By James Rainey

Former President Trump stands on the verge of a series of firsts that once would have seemed unthinkable.

Winning a second term as president would make the Republican nominee the first occupant of the White House to be: a convicted felon, an adjudicated sexual offender, a twice-impeached

federal officeholder and a serial denier of election results that have been certified by the courts and Congress.

Trump has not only weathered those largely self-inflicted wounds, but persuaded somewhere approaching half of Americans to consider putting him back in the White House. For a significant share of Trump supporters it is his opponent, Vice President Kamala

Harris, who is too extreme to lead the country.

Many Harris supporters express incredulity that Trump remains a viable candidate. But veteran political analysts said that, for mostly apolitical voters who don't follow the news closely and who may decide the election, Trump's repeated departures from political norms may have little practical effect. [See Trump, A10]

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