

TRAVEL

Destinations near & far

Legacy of an icon, H6

POCAHONTAS:
WHAT'S FACT,
FICTION?



Boom towns, H2

JAPAN'S
SKI SLOPES
ARE HOT

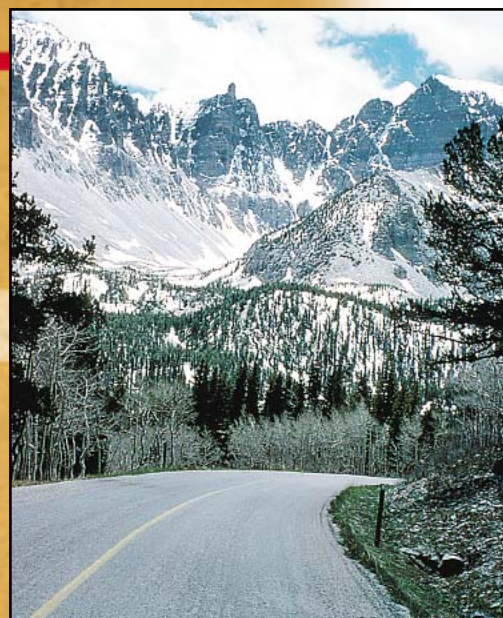
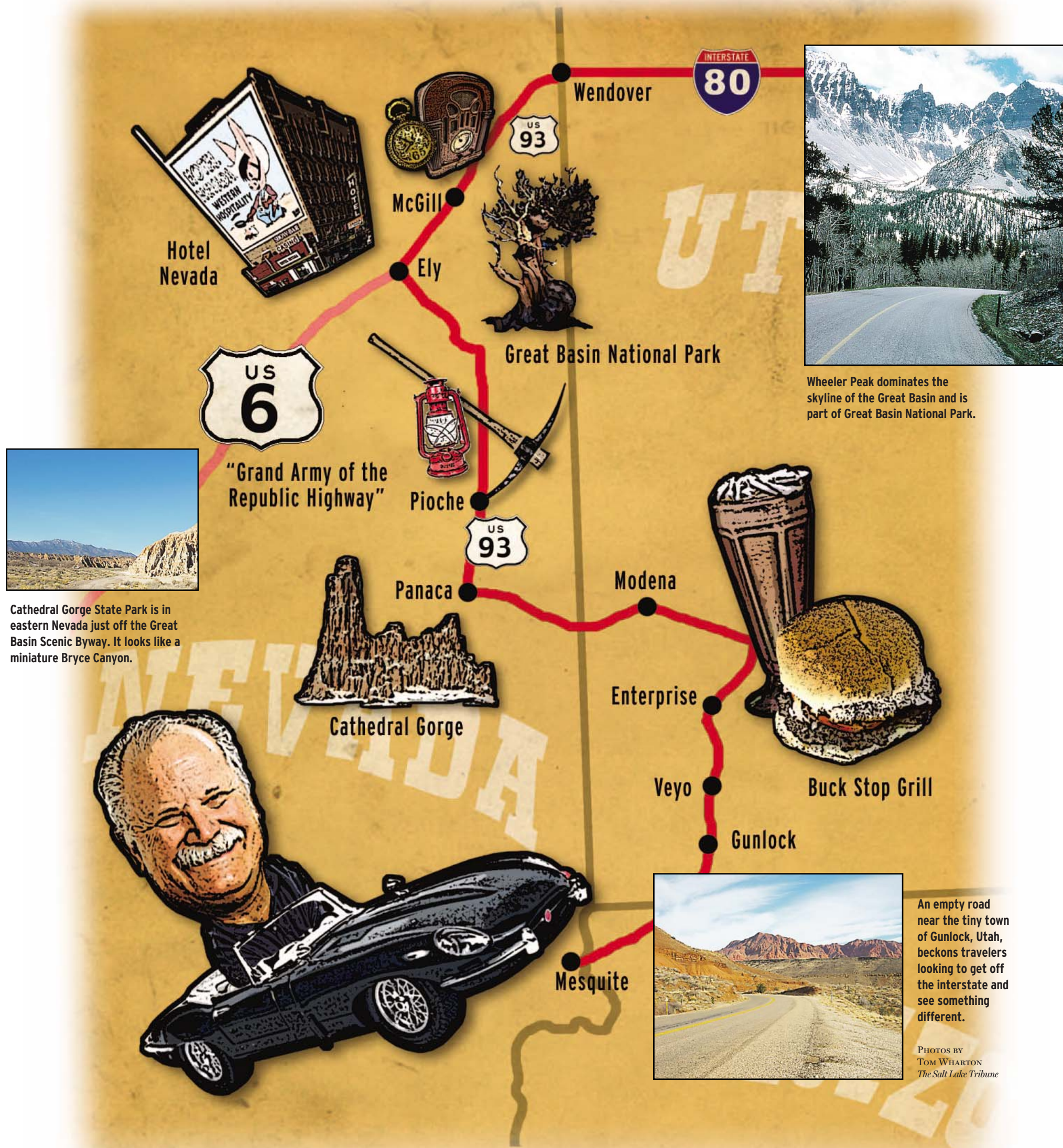
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The Salt Lake Tribune

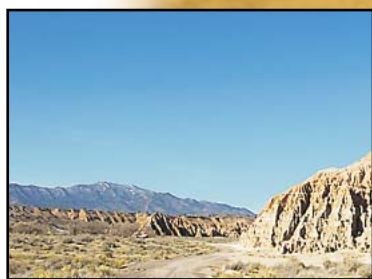
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A ROAD TRIP THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

There's more to see than you might suspect along the less-traveled highways of western Utah and eastern Nevada



Wheeler Peak dominates the skyline of the Great Basin and is part of Great Basin National Park.



Cathedral Gorge State Park is in eastern Nevada just off the Great Basin Scenic Byway. It looks like a miniature Bryce Canyon.

An empty road near the tiny town of Gunlock, Utah, beckons travelers looking to get off the interstate and see something different.

PHOTOS BY TOM WHARTON
The Salt Lake Tribune

BY TOM WHARTON
The Salt Lake Tribune

ILLUSTRATION BY BLAINE HEFNER/The Salt Lake Tribune

Charles Kuralt, the highly regarded journalist, once said nothing interesting ever happens along the interstate. While that might be an overstatement, it is true that travel on any freeway often becomes numbing. Subscribing to that theory, I decided to take a different route than Interstate 15 when driving from Mesquite, Nev., back to Salt Lake in early January.

The plan was simple. Leave the freeway nine miles north of Mesquite, in Arizona, and drive over ancient Utah Hill, taking the road through the tiny hamlets of Gunlock and Veyo west to Enterprise.

From there, the drive continued through Modena near the Utah-Nevada border and into eastern Nevada. Near Panaca, we headed north on U.S. 93, where we would join the 148-mile Great Basin Scenic Byway. We would con-

tinue north from Ely to McGill and end up in Wendover before hitting Interstate 80 for the 120-mile trip back home.

Ask a cynic what there is to see along this route and the answer would be "lots of nothing." Of course, that depends on how one describes "nothing."

If "nothing" is defined as going miles between towns or viewing wide-open spaces of high desert, with moun-

tains on the distant horizon of basin-and-range country, then the route would fit the bill.

But if you drive through Joshua Tree Forest on the Arizona-Utah border, explore Gunlock Reservoir, stop in at the Buck Stop Grill in Enterprise for a malt and a burger or catch 13,081-foot-high Wheeler Peak from a distance, there is much to see along the way.

We would watch high desert ice anglers on Nevada's Cave Creek Lake braving the bitter cold, visit an empty Cathedral Gorge State Park, pass the old mining town of Pioche and stop at an antique shop in McGill while a wind howled across the Great Basin.

See ROAD TRIP, H5