

# MARKETPLACE

## New P.I. sets his eyes on Park City

Miller has worked with public figures since 1991

**CAROLYN WEBBER**  
The Park Record

From when he was 8 years old, Michael Miller knew what he wanted to be when he grew up. After watching shows like "Mannix" and "Magnum, P.I.," he was hooked. He was going to be a private investigator.

Miller, who recently opened a Park City office for his private investigation firm, has been living his dream since he figured out a way to turn his young "calling" into a legitimate career. He has run his own firm in California since 1995.

His firm, MILLERGROUP Intelligence Inc., specializes in investigating stalkers of public figures as well as applicants of reality TV programs, such as "Shark Tank" and "Project Runway." Although most of his clients are still based in Los Angeles, he wanted to come to Utah for a change of scenery and the opportunity to tap into a new market.

Miller said he is still trying to understand how to best serve the Park City population. Since there are some wealthy homeowners and public figures in the area, he is hoping to keep using his specialty while adding new elements — perhaps investigating cheating spouses, missing persons or subpoenaed individuals.

He got his start in the field after graduating from California State University, Sacramento, in criminal justice. Miller returned to his home in New York to work as a fraud investigator for welfare fraud. There, he met a private investigator for the first time and learned the trade.

"It wasn't what I thought the P.I. business was all cracked up to be," he said. "All I did was follow people who claimed to be injured. ... I was like, 'This



CAROLYN WEBBER/PARK RECORD

After receiving his Utah private investigator license last fall, Michael Miller is open for business in Park City. He said he has worked as a police officer and in private investigation since the early 1990s and managed security on the red carpet during the Golden Globes for several years.

is not what those TV shows are about at all."

After a year, he left for the other coast and planned to leave his dream behind. But, he said he was soon hired as an outside investigator by Gavin de Becker, who founded a major protection firm for public figures, Gavin de Becker and Associates.

Miller said he jumped on the opportunity to take a case involving a woman claiming to be the wife of Michael Jackson. "It brought the dream back to reality," he said.

He was hired as the firm's senior investigator until deciding to open his own firm in 1995, he said.

During his years in California, he had one of the craziest experiences in his career. He said a stalker stole the identity of a celebrity living in Malibu, taking their mail and eventually sending Miller and his team on a wild goose chase that involved fake pipe bombs, a poi-

soned dog and a suicide.

"Typically, it's not a dangerous job if you do it right," he said.

Usually the job involves a lot of watching and following, but every now and then there are moments when Miller said he feels like he is in one of the movies he watched as a kid.

What keeps him in the job is not the thrill though; it is the knowledge that he is able to help people. Since most of the people he is investigating are mentally ill, the threat of injury or even death to the public figures they are stalking can get high.

"When people are scared and need peace of mind and you can provide that peace of mind, that is pretty much as good as it

gets," he said.

Miller hopes to bring that high level of security to Park City, since he said that there are few existing firms that serve the area. But, he is also excited to be located by the slopes he used to escape to on vacation.

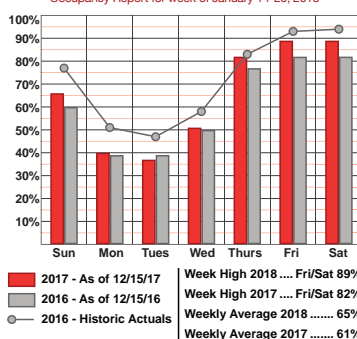
Although he still manages employees who work in Los Angeles, he also wants to grow business in Park City and perhaps hire employees here down the road. He wants to be a mentor for those chasing their dreams of private investigative work, and show them the realities of a sometimes-dangerous, always-rewarding career.

Miller received his California P.I. license in 1991 and received his Utah P.I. license last September.

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### Nightly Lodging Tally

Occupancy Report for week of January 14-20, 2018



**NOTE: This is not a forecast of bookings.** Data presented in this report represents occupancy on the books as of the report date. Source: DestiMetrics & Park City Chamber/Bureau © 2017

## Changes made to Main Street script

Fees, restricted load-out dates are among regulations

**CAROLYN WEBBER**  
The Park Record

As businesses load out of Main Street in preparation for temporary ones to take their place during the Sundance Film Festival, anticipation is high to see how new regulations will play out.

At the conclusion of last year's festival, the city unanimously approved amendments to requirements for temporary businesses coming to Main Street. Along with increased fees, businesses are also not permitted to do large-scale loading out during Sundance's first weekend. Now, the city is waiting to see if the changes will make the street a more attractive, pedestrian-friendly shopping district and entice businesses to stay beyond the first weekend.

Temporary businesses now must pay a total of \$809.58 to rent a space on Main Street, compared to \$372 last year. They pay \$372 for transportation fees, \$45.58 for administration fees, \$45.58 for enhanced enforcement and \$243 to be located on Main Street in the business improvement district. Plus, they must show proof of paying \$100 to public services to pick up trash left behind.

The decision was made after an exceptionally large exodus that took place immediately following the first weekend at last year's festival. Beth Byman, business license specialist for the city, said that parked semi-trucks blocked pedestrians and caused traffic backups. The new regulations aim to improve public safety during the festival.

Plus, it can help business, added Michael Barille, executive director of the Historic Park City Alliance, a group that represents the interests of businesses in the Main Street area.

Please see Changes, A-17

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