

Calistoga Tribune

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Dec. 9, 2022

HOOPS SEASON UNDERWAY

Family affair: cousins and two sets of brothers bolster CHS boys varsity team

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Fairgrounds bond election set in motion

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

For the past four years, Calistoga residents eager to hold on to a large piece of the city's historic identity have urged City Council members to acquire the Napa County Fairgrounds property.

This coming March, residents can make that happen by voting yes on a measure that will authorize the city to obtain \$27.5 million in bond financing to purchase the 70-plus acre property and begin to modernize its facilities and upgrade its infrastructure.

A yes vote will also authorize the creation of a special Community Facilities tax District – contiguous with city boundaries – in which home and property owners would pay annual installments on their property tax bills to repay the bond funding.

"We are bringing back to the public what the public has asked for for multiple years – for at least

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Case against Lopez-Ortega continues in superior court

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

A hearing in the criminal case against former care home operator Irais Lopez-Ortega was continued to Jan. 18 to allow time for her new attorney to review the evidence against her and prepare his defense of his client.

The Calistoga resident and City Council member appeared in person Wednesday morning in a Napa Superior Court room presided over by judge Mark Boessenecker. Her new lawyer, Aaron Frisbie of Santa Rosa, appeared via Zoom to request the continuance, which was agreed to by deputy district attorney Diane Knoles and granted by Boessenecker.

Lopez-Ortega was initially charged in August 2021 with four felony counts of elder abuse stemming from two separate incidents earlier that year involving an 80-year-old male resident of The



PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

Cynthia White and her five-month-old daughter, Sophia, (above) enjoy the tree lighting ceremony at the Holiday Village in Calistoga on Friday, Dec. 2. Below, Stephanie Tihucci is "Elsa" from the Disney movie, Frozen, as part of Chateau Montelena winery's float in the Dec. 3 Lighted Tractor Parade in Calistoga.

Rain breaks long enough for passage of tractor parade

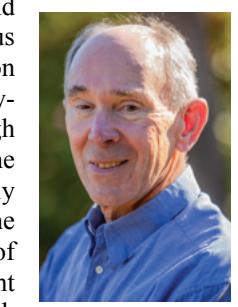
By Pat Hampton

Tribune Publisher

A sizable crowd lined up in the chilly night air along Lincoln Avenue Saturday for the 26th annual Calistoga Lighted Tractor Parade after a day of holiday events and shopping at the Christmas Faire in Pioneer Park and the Calistoga Farmers Market.

Saturday's crowd, which Eric Reichert, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, estimated at 10,000, was significantly smaller than the pre-pandemic record of 15,000.

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Donald Williams

■ For the first time in 10 years, the City Council will be led by a new resident

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

Twenty-seven votes.

In the end, after Calistoga's 1,655 valid votes were counted, that's all that separated Donald Williams and Gary Kraus in the election for a new mayor. Though Kraus led the race initially – from the first release of election night results through five unofficial updates by Nov. 16 – Williams had pulled ahead by 11 votes in results released Nov. 18.

When the final certified vote count came out on Dec. 2, Williams' lead had increased to 27 votes and Kraus conceded the election in a post on his Gary Kraus for Calistoga Facebook page.

"The voters have spoken, and I wish to congratulate Donald Williams on being elected Calistoga's Mayor. I trust he will lead our city council with thoughtful consideration to serve the best interests of our citizens and our town," Kraus wrote. "It's been my greatest honor serving you for the past 16 years on Calistoga's City Council. My deepest thanks to everyone who participated in this vital democratic process, and special gratitude to the dedicated volunteers who tirelessly supported my campaign with integrity and spirit."

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Ole Health mobile unit targets farmworker centers

An OLE Health employee with the non-profit's new mobile healthcare van meets with a farmworker at St. Helena's River Ranch Farmworker Center on Friday, Dec. 2 – the day the new van was put into service.

PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER



By Julie Mitchell

For the Tribune

Agriculture workers often find it difficult to get the healthcare they need due to work schedules, lack of insurance, and sometimes, the ability to get transportation to a doctor's office or clinic.

Now, thanks to OLE Health, the doctor's office will come to them.

On Friday, Dec. 2, OLE Health launched its first mobile health services van at the River Ranch Farm Worker Housing complex on Silverado Trail near St. Helena. There is a similar facility – the Calistoga Farmworker Center – near Calistoga on

Highway 29. The mobile health van – made possible in part by a generous gift from Dalla Valle Vineyards – will offer healthcare services to farmworkers where they live.

Last Friday at the River Ranch facility, clinicians saw eight patients for approximately 20 minutes per patient.

"We are really excited to kick off our mobile healthcare program, partnering with the California Human Development department," said OLE Health's chief development officer Sonia Tolbert. "Today,

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Calistoga high school to host active shooter training Dec. 17

By Julie Mitchell

For the Tribune

If you pass by Calistoga Jr/Sr High School on Saturday, Dec. 17, and see fire trucks, police vehicles, and ambulances parked in front of the campus, don't be alarmed – it's all part of an Active Shooter Training exercise being hosted by the Calistoga Police Department in partnership with the Calistoga Fire Department and American Medical Response – the local ambulance service – as well as Cal Fire.

According to Samantha Arlen, Calistoga Police's School Resource Officer, the exercise has been conducted in the past but since the department has added new staff, and with all-too-common school-shooting incidents happening nationwide, this is critical training for teachers, staff and first responders.

"Our entire agency will be involved, all the way down to the dispatchers," said Arlen. "And we will also enlist about 50 volunteers from the community and 20 seniors from the high school who will be role players."

Arlen said she reached out to the Calistoga Soroptimist and Rotary clubs and the community at large for volunteers. "I have my own immediate fam-

ily coming to volunteer," she added.

Calistoga Police Lt. Andre Charles said this will be a major collaboration between first responders and community members to get some training that is of utmost importance now.

"I know that people think that Calistoga is in a bubble where nothing ever happens," he said, "and that may be true. But I always err on the side of caution; I believe that it's better to be safe than sorry."

Both officers agreed that after the exercise they can evaluate what was done, how it was done, and where they can improve. The department plans to host a similar exercise next spring at the elementary school, and then possibly every two years after that. Teachers are required to attend the drill, according to Arlen, and Calistoga schools superintendent Audra Pittman is very much on board with the exercise.

"We want the faculty and staff at the school to understand that we support them; we want them to feel safe," Arlen said. "You know, there's a lot of trauma that comes with being a teacher, with everything they see in the media, and there's also some apprehension within our department. Do our first responders know what they are going to do in a situation with an active shooter? It's



PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

Angwin firefighters Anthony Lawe and Joseph Shoemate administer first aid to volunteer "victim" and Calistoga school district employee Maria Urzua during a county-wide active shooter drill at Calistoga High School on Jan. 4, 2019. The Calistoga Police Department, in conjunction with several other agencies, will conduct another active shooter drill this year, on Saturday, Dec. 17, at the Calistoga Junior Senior High School campus.

really important that we get the opportunity in a controlled environment to make mistakes and learn and grow from them."

During the event, from 8 a.m. to 1

p.m., the entire campus will be roped off and security will be on hand. No one will be allowed on campus or on the track or field behind the school, said Arlen.

OLE Health employees work inside the non-profit's new mobile health van designed to take healthcare directly to one of Napa County's most vulnerable populations – agriculture workers, who often find it difficult to get the healthcare they need due to work schedules, lack of insurance, and sometimes, the ability to get transportation to a doctor's office or clinic. The new mobile healthcare van will be at either St. Helena's River Ranch Farmworker Center or Calistoga's Farmworker Center every Friday.

PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER



HEALTH

Continued from page 1

our goal is to engage and connect with as many people as we can and do some initial screenings, and as patients need additional services, we will connect them to one of our regional health centers."

According to Tolbert, the van was ordered before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, but supply chain issues forced the organization to wait for a lengthy time. Now, the van will be at either the St. Helena or Calistoga location every Friday afternoon.

It is essentially an exam room on wheels. Care is free regardless of whether a patient has health insurance or not, but OLE's enrollment team will be on hand because one of the program's goals is to get farmworkers linked to health insurance, making accessing care easier. All the OLE providers working in the

mobile program are bilingual.

Services provided include preventative screenings, initiation of chronic disease management, health education, and referrals to community resources. At future dates, additional services including vaccination and insurance enrollment assistance will be available.

Tolbert says the practitioners anticipate encountering a number of patients who have high blood pressure or possibly diabetes due to the demographics of the approximately 60 people, mostly men, who reside at the farmworker centers.

"We'll be getting patients connected with labs and providers if they need specialists," she said. "And I think it's worth noting that this program is fully funded through grants and donations."

Physician's assistant Lulu Garcia was there Friday to kick off the mobile clinic.

"I'm always excited to

help the underserved population here in the valley," Garcia said. "While we're not prepared to do COVID testing today, we hope to have that ready for next week."

OLE Health was founded 50 years ago by farmworker advocates and vintners to serve Spanish-speaking migrant workers without access to basic healthcare services. Today, the organization has six healthcare centers in wine country that offer comprehensive medical services to all, regardless of insurance or ability to pay.

Founded in 1967, California Human Development's purpose is to create opportunities for those who struggle with finding education, training, jobs and improved social conditions. Funded by federal, state, local, and private services, the group reaches out across northern California, offering bilingual, improved social conditions and a support network for farmworkers.

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COMMUNITY FORUM on the FAIRGROUNDS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICT

Tuesday, December 13th • 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Calistoga High School Multi-Purpose Room
1608 Lake Street

Sponsored by the City Council, the Mayor and City Councilmember Donald Williams will lead the presentation and respond to questions the community may have.

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