

# Calistoga Tribune

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## Businesses, residents weigh costs of backup power vs. PG&E shutdown

■ **Attend a Napa County Emergency Preparedness meeting in Calistoga this Thursday night from 6 to 8 p.m. at Calistoga High School. See Page 2 for more information on this meeting.**

By **Kim Beltran**  
Tribune Editor

Faced with the potential of numerous power shutdowns during the wildfire season, many Calistoga homeowners have installed backup energy systems to keep their lights on and refrigerators running when PG&E flips the switch off.

Likewise, many local business owners, who stand to lose thousands of dollars in inventory or income due to an extended power outage, admit to shopping around for backup systems of their own – most finding the cost prohibitive

and gambling that the power shutdowns will be few and far between and short.

"We just gotta hope that we don't get shut down for more than four to six hours," Calistoga Roastery owner Clive Richardson said this week, noting that he looked into the cost of connecting a generator to his building after losing some \$2,500 in inventory when PG&E conducted its first Public Safety Power Shutdown affecting Calistoga last fall.

But the price tag of \$20,000 to \$25,000 for a diesel generator large

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Mike Kirn

## No more 'acting' for new city mgr.

■ Kirn's appointment paves way for Derek Rayner to be named Public Works' director

By **Kim Beltran**  
Tribune Editor

The City Council on Tuesday named Mike Kirn its new city manager, approving an employment contract that starts him out earning \$16,500 per month.

Following a satisfactory six-month performance review, Kirn's monthly salary will go to \$18,084.

On Wednesday morning, Kirn, the city's former Public Works director, sent out an email stating that Derek Rayner had been appointed acting Public Works director effective immediately.

"This council felt very comfortable elevating  
See **COUNCIL** on page 5



Derek Rayner

## Lifeguards in training

■ Community pool proving vital to hoardes of children and adults as well

By **Kim Beltran**  
Tribune Editor

As it nears its 10th anniversary this fall (Don't miss the Aug. 4 celebration!) the Calistoga Community Pool is busier than ever, Parks and Recreation director Rachel Melick reported to the City Council this week.

The heavier use of the pool, as well as all recreation programs, is a result of the city offering the services free of charge to Calistoga residents.

"We're seeing huge increases in our numbers, which is great," Melick said. "We're having to

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PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

Greyson Ittig practices 'rescuing' a distressed swimmer during a lifeguard training class sponsored by the city of Calistoga at the Community Pool. So far this summer recreation coordinator Emily Gouveia and pool manager Monica Rubio have taught 24 students in two separate lifeguard classes. Ittig's group, for teens 15-and-over, were training to work as lifeguards at the pool. The second session was designed for students 11 to 14 to introduce them to lifeguarding.

## Not enough counseling for students

By **Claudia Aceves**  
Tribune Reporter

More junior and senior high school students are being referred for mental health counseling than can be provided for, a spokesman for a local, non-profit family services agency told Calistoga school trustees Monday night.

Of 74 Calistoga Junior Senior High School students referred for counseling this year, 51 received services while 23 students remained on a waitlist, said UpValley Family Centers Education Program manager Zach Guzik.

However, he said, there is a large coalition of organizations and community stakeholders working to reduce that waitlist number and

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## Blackbird pops back up, joining several new retail ventures



PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

Sherwood Construction employee Rafael Vargas in May puts the finishing touches on a newly-remodeled building housing CAMi Wine Tasting and Gallery on Lincoln Avenue.

By **Claudia Aceves**  
Tribune Reporter

Blackbird of Calistoga is back, reopening last weekend as a "pop-up" shop at its original location for an undetermined amount of time, owner Nancy Putney-Abernathy said this week.

New business additions downtown also include Vintage Treehouse, West of Poppy and CAMi Wine Tasting and Gallery.

"Practicing the pop-up concept gives us the flexibility to pick up and move somewhere else if we haven't found a new place yet," said Putney-Abernathy, who closed the retail store when her landlord said the building was being sold.

But because the sale of the

Seiberlich building, otherwise known as the Odd Fellows Hall, has not yet concluded, Putney-Abernathy said she was able to reopen her store on a month-to-month basis.

The building, located at 1343-1347 Lincoln Avenue, also previously housed a Man's Supply, which owner Scott Hermann closed permanently in February this year.

Potential buyers of the building have said they want to open a whisky distillery but the sale will be contingent upon city approval of that use, Putney-Abernathy said. Proponents of the Calistoga Distillery received a conceptual design review in front of the Calistoga Planning Commission in March. Applicant John Hardesty

would also undertake the mandatory seismic retrofit of the building before any business could occupy it.

Meanwhile, Putney-Abernathy is back in business, offering the same merchandise that was available before closing the store in April, including jewelry, home goods, apparel, books, cards, toys, gifts and more.

"The support from the community is overwhelming. We really appreciate it," she said. "This gives us the opportunity to find another location. You never know, something great might come."

Putney-Abernathy said she

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