

Calistoga Tribune

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Roundabout comes to a stop

■ Would hurt local pizza business; not needed

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

The state's plan for turning the oddly-angled four-way stop at Lincoln Avenue and the Silverado Trail into a roundabout came to an abrupt stop this week after nearby residents protested and a pizza house owner said it was unnecessary and dangerous.

City council members heard from 16 speakers Tuesday night,

with the majority citing concerns over pedestrian and bicycle safety issues as well as cost and impacts to La Prima Pizza, which sits on the corner of Lake Street and Lincoln Avenue.

Joe Mathews was concerned about pedestrian safety, especially because traffic does not stop in a roundabout but keeps flowing. He said he counted 14 cars parked near the popular trailhead and that

"you're inviting serious problems if traffic doesn't stop for pedestrians."

Having driven through roundabouts in other states, Dick Kuykendall objected to having one in Calistoga. "You're throwing our money away" and "wasting our time," he said, suggesting the money would be better spent putting in a crosswalk at Brannan Street and Lincoln Avenue for seniors and students.

Joe Bob Hitchcock favored

realigning the intersection to a four-way stop, offering that "something needs to be done there, but not a roundabout."

Mayor Chris Canning explained that the \$2 million Caltrans had set aside for the roundabout was not transferable and that the state agency put in the additional stop signs as a temporary fix.

The plight of the roundabout's effect on La Prima Pizza drew

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City council enthusiastic about plans for gazebo

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

Next year's summertime music concert series in Pioneer Park will be welcomed by a new, twice-as-big gazebo as well as new lighting, fencing, and pathways – and it won't cost the city a dime.

Bob Fiddaman, president of Friends of Pioneer Park (FPP), introduced the renovation and replacement plans to city council members Tuesday.

Fiddaman said the FPP consists of 12 people who have been meeting the past six months to agree on a park master plan and new gazebo design.

The non-profit group hopes to raise \$250,000 before the year's end for the project, Fiddaman said. The total cost could reach as high as \$400,000 "for all the work we intend to do."

Fiddaman wants it done in time for the 2014 Concerts in the Park series, which usually starts in mid-

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Bicyclist killed in accident on Silverado Trail

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

A bicyclist was killed in a crash on the Silverado Trail when he swerved in front of a car and was run over near the county corporation yard.

California Highway Patrol reports show that Thomas Battat, 50, from San Francisco, was riding southbound on the shoulder of the Trail at 1:40 p.m. with a companion when he drifted into the

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WILDLAND FIRE BURNS ON OAT HILL MINE ROAD



PHOTO BY JOHNNY WILLIAM VILLAGOMES

A Cal Fire attack helicopter flew over nearby homes after dumping its water bucket on Thursday's fire.



PHOTO BY JOHNNY WILLIAM VILLAGOMES

A Cal Fire plane dumps retardant on a fire that erupted off the Oat Hill Mine Road Trail last Thursday and burned a half acre before being extinguished by fire personnel.

Four boys questioned in hill fire

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

Four juveniles seen running from the Oat Hill Mine Road Trail are being questioned over their possible involvement in a half-acre hillside brush fire last week.

A late afternoon fire that brought crews from four fire agencies was quickly extinguished on Thursday. No buildings were damaged, although it was "very, very near" Zahtila Vineyards. "From our land, you

can see the retardant they dropped on the ridge. No damage to us at all, just awed by the response of CDF and grateful for their work," said owner Laura Swanton in an email.

According to Fire Chief Steve Campbell, units from Calistoga, Cal Fire, St. Helena, Deer Park and fire fighting aircraft responded to a small grass fire on Oat Hill Mine Trail about half a mile up from the trail head at 5:03 p.m. The fire was quickly brought under control and burned mostly

grass and light brush.

A witness identified two young boys running from the scene, said Lt. Jonathon Mills. The two boys, detained by Mills and Officer Pedro Magana, lead police to two other youth who may have been involved.

Mills said Cal Fire Battalion Chief Ben Nichols, who is investigating the cause of the fire, had talked to the four youth and visited the site of the fire as well.

Aircraft dumped retardant and helicopters used water buckets to douse the fire.

Can we talk?

We keep coming back

By Jon & Carol Falk
Haddon Township, New Jersey

Calistoga bound - again and again it seems. Although we live 2,880 miles from The Hideaway Cottages, we remain over the years frequent visitors to Calistoga. What has your small town and immediate surrounding area retained that keeps us coming back besides our pals?

Mostly it's the creative arts and photography going on there and the

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By Sharon Stensaas
Yountville Sun Publisher & Editor

Editor's note: We asked Sharon Stensaas, who has published the Yountville Sun for the past 13 years, to share her thoughts on small towns and the changes that have happened in her hometown.

Yountville has experienced a huge transformation in the last 15 years. Though tourism was driving the economy of this little village of 3,000 back in the 1990s, now that focus is more intense,

upscale and complete.

The French Laundry's quick rise to national and international success branded Yountville as a destination for foodies, and most Yountvillians took pride in that distinction. Other existing restaurants in Yountville benefitted, and it paved the way for more upstarts in fine dining.

In 1998 Villaggio Inn and Spa and Hotel Yountville opened, dou-

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Changes in Yountville driven by tourism

A CONVERSATION



A special Tribune multi-part series about small towns – especially our small town – and how we are going to define ourselves over the next decade by our choices and conversations.

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