

# Calistoga Tribune

Independently owned and published in Calistoga for Calistogans since 2002

50¢



- ▼ **IS IT OR ISN'T IT?**  
*Oat Hill Mine Trail is open despite RLS still being closed*  
**Below**
- **4HERS HELP POCHINIS**  
*Christmas Tree Farm open for business with help from friends*  
**5**
- ◀ **SEE THE LIGHTS**  
*Hop on the Holly Trolley to check out holiday decorations*  
**11**



PHOTOS BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

A group of Calistoga women including, from left, Jeanne McCann-Baswell, Stephanie Duff-Eriksen, Linda Williamson, Natalie Moon-Wainwright, Karen Slusser, Lil Ticen, Barb Herrmann and Christine Plant meet regularly at Calistoga Roastery to write and mail postcards to Democratic voters across the country.

## Taking action, making a difference

By Kim Beltran  
Tribune Editor

Inspired after taking part in last January's Women's March, a small group of Calistoga women turned their enthusiasm into action – action that they believe is having an impact on elections nationwide.

The women – Jeanne McCann-Baswell, Stephanie Duff-Eriksen, Natalie Moon-Wainwright, Karen Slusser, Lil Ticen, Barb Herrmann, Linda Williamson, Christine Plant and Jeri Hansen – meet once a month at Calistoga Roastery to write postcards to Democratic voters in Republican strongholds where

elections are being held, reminding them to cast their ballots.

“Voter turnout is the single most important thing people can do to shift an election,” said Herrmann. “It’s so very important.”

Things heated up for the  
*See ACTION on page 7*



## Police, fire collecting toys, food

Fire victims encouraged to seek help if needed

By Kim Beltran  
Tribune Editor

While Calistoga is kicking off the Christmas holiday season this weekend with lots of fun and frivolity, there also remains the sad undertone of many families who struggle to afford a big meal or gifts for their children.

This year, the need is likely to be greater given the devastating impact the October wildfires had on so many.

To help make the holidays a bit less stressful for these parents – and perhaps a bit merrier for their children – donations of non-perishable foods, new unwrapped toys and gift cards for either are being accepted during tomorrow's Christmas Faire at the Napa County Fairgrounds.

In collaboration with the Napa County Fair Association, the Redwood Empire Food Bank is conducting the food drive through Dec. 14.

The toy drive is an annual project of the Calistoga Firefighters Association, which packages gifts with food baskets handed out by the Calistoga Police Officers Association.

The CPOA takes applications for the program and then distributes the food and gifts to some 30 needy families in Calistoga. Food donations for this collection should be dropped off directly at the police department at 1234 Washington St.

*See DONATIONS on page 6*

Evidence of the grading done by Cal Fire on the Oat Hill Mine Trail can be seen in this photo. The trail was used as a fire break during the Tubbs Fire but has since been reopened to the public.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Yes, the Oat Hill Mine Trail is open

By Granville Fox  
Tribune Reporter

The Oat Hill Mine Trail reopened last month following remediation work by Cal Fire crews to stabilize the lower portion of the trail that had been graded and used as a fire break for the Oct. 8 Tubbs Fire, officials said.

The Napa Open Space District announced the reopening of the trail on Nov. 3 but because the easternmost leg passes through Robert Louis Stevenson State Park – which remains closed to the public due to fire damage – state parks officials were telling hikers to stay off the trail. However, since Oat

Hill Mine Trail was relatively undamaged and state parks officials have no jurisdiction over the trail due to a county easement, Napa Open Space District officials said they see no reason for it to remain closed.

“At this point all of the Oat Hill Mine Trail is open,” Napa Open Space District General Manager John Woodbury said in an email this week.

Woodbury conceded, however, that more work needs to be done on the lower portion in the future.

“Although it is now usable, that section of the trail looks a little raw and needs more repair to correct potential erosion,” he said.

The 8.3-mile stretch of trail connecting Calistoga and the western end of Aetna Springs Road in Pope Valley was closed to the public, along with several other public trails and parks, on Oct. 9 as the Tubbs Fire still threatened the area.

While Oat Hill Mine Trail is open, Palisades Trail and Robert Louis Stevenson State Park remain closed until Cal Fire completes further damage assessments.

The Summit Trail, an iconic RLS park trail that heads toward the peak of Mount St. Helena, is blocked with caution tape but hik-

*See TRAIL on page 5*