

Calistoga Tribune

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Puerta Vallarta to reopen, stores to expand, new business coming

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FILE PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

In this file photo from 2018, a group of preschoolers cross Lincoln Avenue on their way to a story-time reading at the Calistoga Library. This group was from Hearts & Hands Preschool, housed in St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Another early education facility in Calistoga, the California State Preschool (below) run by the Napa County Office of Education, will be moving from its Eddy Street location to a new home at the Napa County Fairgrounds if its use permit is approved by the City of Calistoga.

Preschool seeks use permit for new location

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

Calistoga's state-funded preschool has filed for the city permit that would allow it to move to its new home.

Managed by Napa County's Office of Education, the preschool will be constructed behind the Calistoga Boys & Girls Club on Napa County Fairgrounds property, assuming the city's Planning Commission signs off on the use permit.

County Superintendent of Education Barbara Nemko confirmed this week that her office had signed a 20-year lease and easement agreement with the county, which owns



the fairgrounds property.

Nemko said NCOE will pay annual rent of one dollar, the same amount it has paid the city of Calistoga for its current location since 2001. Even then, Nemko knew that the school would eventually have to find a

new spot. Its Eddy Street location had been identified in planning documents by the city for extension of the Napa Valley Vine Trail between Dunaweal Lane and the Oat Hill Mine Trail on Highway 29 north of town.

Calistoga Planning and Building director Lynn Goldberg said staff is processing the use permit and gathering the information necessary to determine whether the school plans meet city zoning laws and other requirements.

Nemko said her office had been awarded additional money by the state to add a second building at the new site, doubling the preschool's current capacity of 48 students.

Nemko said two new modular or portable buildings would be brought in to the new location at 1407 N. Oak St.

Plans also call for an out-

See **PRESCHOOL** page 9

Laundromat owner asks city for help

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

Judy Neid says the city's water and wastewater rate increases could end up sinking the Calistoga Laundromat.

Neid, who has leased the building and operated the business since 1991, sent a letter this week to City Council members, imploring them to make some kind of accommodation that will allow her to keep the facility open.

"The Calistoga Laundromat will probably have to close due to the continued increases in water rates," Neid wrote in her letter to city officials. "I am asking you to look at a special rate

See **LAUNDROMAT** on page 11

Tree work in elm tunnel will slow traffic for a week

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

Caltrans will close one lane on Highway 29 in St. Helena near Beringer Winery for a week so crews can remove and replace three diseased trees in the historic Tunnel of Elms.

The work is scheduled to begin Monday, Feb. 25, and end in the afternoon on Friday, March 1, according to a notice from the state highway agency.

"Crews will alternate lane closures in both northbound and southbound directions," the notice states. "This will allow one traffic lane on SR-29 to remain open

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Puerta Vallarta restaurant reopening downtown

■ Also on tap: Cheer Bar, a modern take on historic soda fountains, to open soon; Picayune Cellars seeking to relocate, and Rove expanding into new space.

By Claudia Aceves

Tribune Reporter

Residents concerned about the number of empty storefronts in Calistoga's downtown business district now have reason for a bit of optimism with news that some of the spaces are being filled and will open in the next few weeks.

Local favorite Puerta Vallarta Mexican food restaurant, which closed in May after 25 years in business, will reopen in the space at 1350 Lincoln Ave., formerly home to Tanit restaurant, which closed in December.

Nearby at 1348 Lincoln Ave.,

Alicia Wong is busy remodeling part of the space that once housed the eclectic Chicken Scratch in order to open Cheer Bar, a modern take on the soda fountains of the 1800s.

On the other side of Lincoln Avenue, Rove Boutique is said to be expanding and relocating to the former Catch location next door, and Picayune Cellars owner Claire Ducrocq Weinkauff is seeking city approval to move into the lower floor of the Carmel Gallery building at 1329 Lincoln Ave.

When Puerta Vallarta owner Rigo Caldera found out his lease at 1473 Lincoln Ave. wasn't being

renewed, he immediately began searching for another spot to move to but couldn't find one that fit the restaurant's needs. The owners of the building that had housed Puerta Vallarta restaurant were making way for their son, Kevin Sprenger, to open a new restaurant, brewery and tap room.

Sprenger, who owns Sprenger's Restaurant and Tap Room in Santa Rosa, and his partners are currently working to get their restaurant up and running before starting work on the brewery, said Calistoga Planning and Building director Lynn Goldberg.

Caldera family members confirmed the restaurant would open its doors again, but the opening

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TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

Puerta Vallarta restaurant, which operated at 1473 Lincoln Ave. (above) for 25 years, closed last May when the building's owners chose not to renew its lease. Members of the Caldera family, which owns Puerta Vallarta, said this week they will reopen in a new location on Lincoln Avenue.