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ROSES BY MANY NAMES ▶

From movie stars to presidents,
'famous' blooms for your garden

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City seeking \$12M in grants for reservoir, water treatment upgrades

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

With an aging reservoir that has lost capacity from the wear and tear of aging since it was constructed 80 years ago, the city council voted Tuesday to partner with the state and spend \$6.7 million to improve Kimball Dam by increasing the height of the dam, harden the spillway and restore the reservoir to its

original capacity. Councilmembers approved a request by Public Works Director Derek Raynor to prepare and submit an application for a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program grant of \$6.75 million to fix the utility at 3522 Evey Road. A federal grant of \$5.06 million will be coupled with a

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Revenues 25% higher than projected

During mid-year budget review, council approves extra \$50,000 for recreation department to open pool early

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

So far, the city appears to have weathered the nearly year-long economic recession caused by the coronavirus pandemic fairly well.

In a mid-year review of the 2020-21 budget, Administrative Services director Gloria Leon on Tuesday told the City Council that revenues – including transient oc-

cupancy taxes – have come in 25 percent higher than had been projected. That, combined with budget cutbacks, will leave the city's General Fund reserve at \$5.3 million when the fiscal year ends June 30. The cutbacks include leaving eight staff positions vacant for a savings of \$781,000, Leon reported.

If the economy picks up, that reserve – now at 48 percent of the city's operating expenses – would

be higher but whether that happens or not is anyone's guess.

Tuesday's budget review also included adjustments necessary to cover "unanticipated demands" caused by the city's response to the pandemic and to the Glass and LNU Lightning Complex fires last fall. Those costs, for which the city will be reimbursed, included \$66,000 in police and dispatch overtime due to the two fires, and \$500,000 for fire department strike teams.

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Community activist, founding mother of CEF passes away

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

Calistoga lost a community treasure with the sudden passing of Lil Ticen, 78, on Sunday.

"Lil was one of the most kind, compassionate women I have ever known and a true champion of service to Calistoga," said close friend Suzan Shaw. "Her sunny, positive disposition and her infectious laugh will be missed by so many."

Shaw added that the list of projects and fundraisers Ticen participated in was long and extraordinary, from being a "Founding Mother" of the Calistoga Education Foundation in the late 1980s, supporter of the Calistoga High School Music & Arts Booster and Tucker Farm Center advo-



Lil Ticen

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Crop report shows drops in tonnage, price for wine grapes

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

The 2020 California statewide grape crush totaled 3,542,038 tons, down 13.9% from the 2019 harvest of 4,115,413 tons. A crushing disappointment for the industry, this represents the lowest tonnage and some of the lowest prices growers have experienced in the last decade according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service preliminary grape crush report released Feb. 10.

"This may be the most challenging crush report to analyze," wrote Greg Livengood for The Ciatti Company, a bulk wine and brokerage business in Novato. "Total tons were down but that was due to both Mother Nature's lighter yields and issues of smoke exposure that plagued most

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Calistoga native Jonah Peltz, aka Peltz the Prodigy, shares his story of personal growth and dealing with grief on his recently released and independently-produced hip hop album, *Lessons from Losses*, available on most music streaming platforms.

MUSIC VIDEO CAPTURE

Locals making their music their way

'Lessons from Losses' provides an outlet for hip hop artist Peltz the Prodigy's grief

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

Jonah Peltz aka Peltz the Prodigy has been into rap music since he was eight years old.

He has also never shied away from sharing his feelings or being vulnerable, and he has long used writing and rhyming as a way to express himself, so blending the two was a natural progression.

As he grew older, he and a high school buddy – Austin McGee Pereira aka Polar Bear – would share their rhymes, and practice "free-styling," a form of improvising lyrics on the spot, with or without instrumentals. They eventually formed a duo, PB & Peltz, recording a couple of singles together and adding video to the projects.

Having graduated from Calistoga High School in 2015, the two friends were off to new adventures – Pereira was living in Oregon while Peltz was attending college and running track at Santa Rosa Junior College. While the duo still collaborated occasionally, they also continued with individual projects, said Peltz, who began developing a home recording studio and set his sights on a solo hip hop album project.

The now 24-year-old had transferred from SRJC to a private liberal arts college in Los Angeles, planning to pursue a degree, run track and field and immerse himself in the area's hip hop culture. But he struggled being away from his tight-knit family – parents, Tom and Tammy Peltz

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Kristofer Gerhardt and Amanda Tchamourian are *Death n Taxes*, a 'lysergic garage rock band' with a Bay Area following.

Death n Taxes: Winery workers by day, psychedelic garage rockers by night

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

Kristofer Gerhardt's evolution as a musician has taken his band *Death n Taxes* through a couple of iterations but the group has really been hitting the high notes since his partnership with drummer Amanda Tchamourian. The two had met in seventh

grade band class at Middletown Junior High School – she was a drummer; he a guitarist. Gerhardt moved back to Calistoga, where he had attended elementary school, but the two stayed in touch.

Fast-forward to 2018 when, in need of a new drummer, he

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