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PHOTO BY GENE DUFFY JR.

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BACK ON THE MARKET



ARCHIVE PHOTO BY NOAH HAMPTON-ASMUS

The old hospital is back on the market for \$995,000

A piece of history on the market

By Amanda Rhodes
Tribune Staff Writer

Whether you call it the Francis House, the Old Hospital or the vacant lot you drive by each day, the property located at 1403 Myrtle Street is rich in history and once again back on the market.

The listing price to own a piece of Calistoga history, \$995,000.

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The Francis house, known now as the "old hospital," was built in 1886 in the Second Empire style as a residence.

Budget audit shows healthier city coffers

■ Figures show heavy reliance on tourism industry

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

The city's annual audit for the fiscal year 2014 once again pointed the spotlight on the dependency Calistoga has on the tourism industry.

Michael O'Connor, CPA from R.J. Ricciardi, Inc., presented the annual financial report to the city council on Tuesday.

"The 2014 general fund ending balance is a significant improve-

ment compared to the fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2013," O'Connor told the council.

The city's general fund ended the fiscal year with a balance of \$4.85 million compared to \$2.46 million in 2013. The Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) increased 13 percent from 2013-2014 while property taxes increased 2 percent and charges for services brought a 5 percent increase.

Property tax, TOT and sales tax make up 72 percent of the city's general fund, O'Connor reported.

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City to appoint ad hoc committee for library

■ Mayor wants everyone to be on the same page

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

Recognizing the need for more public input on the renovation of the Calistoga Library, council members approved the creation

of a committee to help bridge the differences between the county's plan and residents who still have questions about the changes.

Mayor Chris Canning, with council approval, will appoint a three-member Ad Hoc Calistoga Library Renovation Review Com-

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PG&E will conduct survey for gas leaks

■ Technology 1,000 times more sensitive than old

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

New technology for detecting and repairing natural gas leaks received the support of the city council on Tuesday.

PG&E representatives Mark Van Gorder and superintendent Dennis MacAleese said the leak detection process will take place from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. to

midnight from Jan. 20-22.

A PG&E vehicle, equipped with super sensitive, car-mounted technology will drive slowly through neighborhoods using the Picarro car-mounted leak-detection technology that's 1,000 times more sensitive to leaks than other tools. Leaks will be fixed right away, MacAleese said.

"We work at these hours to avoid traffic congestion since the cars operate at a lower level of

See **GAS LEAKS** page 7

Thieves steal truck to smash window and grab ATM's \$1500

■ Second time ATM machine plucked from More 4 Less

By Amanda Rhodes
Tribune Staff Writer

Two suspects used a stolen truck to steal a U-Haul trailer from Calistoga Towing, crash into More For Less and steal the ATM in the early hours of Sunday, Jan. 11.

It's a story fit for the movies but the plywood boards now hanging

in the area that were once large glass windows in the convenience store of the Arco gas station are real.

"They stole the U-Haul across the street and crashed into our window," Erika Caballero, assistant manager of More For Less, said.

Sgt. Matt Freese was the officer who responded to the 3 a.m. call of a burglary in the 900 block of Petrified Forest Rd.

Freese confirms that two men driving a black Dodge pick-up truck stole a U-Haul trailer from Calistoga Towing, attached the trailer to the truck, backed through the windows of More For Less and knocked the ATM off the bolts that were holding it to the ground.

The suspects then loaded the ATM into the open 5x9 U-Haul trailer and fled towards Sonoma County, Freese said.

"Both the ATM and the trailer were later located in Sonoma County. The ATM had been broken into and the cash removed. The estimated amount of money lost is around \$1,500," Freese said.

Damage to the store far outweighs what was stolen from the

machine.

Total cost in destruction to More For Less is estimated at \$8,000, the cost to repair the widow alone is expected to cost around \$6,900 Caballero said. She added that she believes the suspects were staking out the store beforehand and nothing but the ATM was stolen.

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