

Calistoga Tribune

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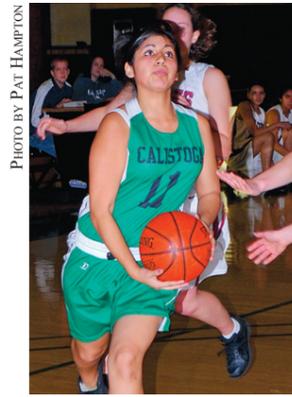


PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

Young Calistoga man dies in tragic New Year's Eve accident

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Senior Staff Writer

A 24-year-old Calistoga High School graduate died in a single-car accident on New Year's Eve in Guerneville.

Leopoldo Rubio Jr., known by family and friends as Leo, was killed instantly in the crash.

According to Officer Jon Sloat of the California Highway Patrol, Rubio was heading east on Highway 116 from Guerneville travelling at a high rate of speed in a 35 mile per hour zone. For unknown reasons, his 2005 F250 pickup veered off the road, striking a guardrail. The truck went

across the road and down an embankment, overturning several times, Sloat said. Rubio was not wearing a seatbelt, and was thrown from the truck.

Sloat said no one witnessed the accident, but a passing motorist saw the wreck and called 911. The call came in at 3 a.m. Sloat said CHP suspects that alcohol use is involved, but blood test results



Leo Rubio

will not be available for a couple of weeks.

Leo's parents, Leopoldo Rubio and Martha Rubio, were in Michoacán, Mexico, at the time of the accident. His younger brother, Bryant, 21, is the one who received the phone call.

This week, the family home has been filled with friends and family, trying to make sense of the loss. On Tuesday, Patty Zepeda, Leo's aunt (Martha Rubio's younger sister), explained that the parents were still en route, trying to get back to Calistoga.

There had been no flights avail-

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Family Center: Need for senior services still high

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Senior Staff Writer

Two and a half months after opening a separate office to provide resources to local seniors, the Calistoga Family Center (CFC) knows one thing for sure: the need for elder services is even bigger than they had imagined.

Since opening day that second week in October, CFC case manager Elena Mendez has had nearly 65 people walk through the door of the Washington Street office seeking assistance of one kind or another. Considering that most case man-

agers are expected to carry a load of about 25, and also taking into account that Mendez already provides case management for 82 clients through the CFC, the workload is little short of astonishing.

Executive director Victoria Li said that thankfully, the Soroptimists International of Calistoga and the City of Calistoga both pitched in some money for administrative and staffing costs, allowing them to train CFC employee Irma Sanchez, so she can begin to

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PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

Enjoying the city park during Wednesday's sunny afternoon at Pioneer Park were (left to right) Amy Vega, 3, Jose Manuel Vega, 7, and Francisco Aris, 7. Weather forecasts show plenty of dry, mild days into next week.

Whether there's weather

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

The 5,000 city-supplied plastic sand bags are still in storage at the public works office on Washington Street and won't be needed anytime soon as dry, sunny weather continues to stave off all winter storm preparations.

Like most of the North Bay, Calistoga is enjoying unusually balmy weather with high daytime temperatures in the 60s and nighttime temperatures in the low 40s. Extended forecasts at the National Weather Service website show clear sunny days into next week with no chance of rain.

The city's Kimball Dam reservoir, one of the

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Old Hospital needs buyer with money, love of history

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

Few know what is going to happen to the historic Francis House, and those who do, aren't telling.

The property known as the Old Hospital at 1409 Myrtle St. has been sitting empty and abandoned since foreclosure in December 2010 put the building's future in suspense.

"It's going to take someone with a lot of money and love for historic properties," said senior planner Ken MacNab. "I don't know what bank would loan on it."

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City Recreation Services enlivened by energy, ideas of two new part-time staffers

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Senior Staff Writer

Calistoga Recreation Services is brimming with creative ideas and fresh fun, thanks to the energy and expertise of two new part-time recreation coordinators.

Four months into their jobs, Dan Opperman and Mary Sherman have been around long enough to find their footing, but are still enough in the "newbie" state that locals haven't all been introduced.

Sherman said, "I'm really happy to be here. It's a really energized community. It's nice to be in a healthy, active environment."

Opperman added, "There's always been that health and exercise, recreation message, since Sam Brannan. Our job is to keep that going."

Sherman, 62, heads up the adult and senior programs, and is in the office daily from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. She lives in Calistoga Springs Mobile Home Park.

Opperman, 29, is the coordinator for the youth and teen programming, and is in the office from 1-5 p.m. He lives in Napa.

Both report to and assist Olivia Lemen, the recreation manager, and work out of the Recreation Services office upstairs at the Monhoff Center.

The two new staffers have impressive health and recreation backgrounds.

Sherman has an undergraduate degree in physical education from the University of Iowa. She received a master's in public health education from the University of California-Berkeley, and then did an internship with Healthwise in Boise, Idaho, working with seniors. She said that's what first got her interested in interacting with the elderly as part of her career.

Sherman worked at Berkeley

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PHOTO BY MICHELLE WING

Dan Opperman acts as the part-time youth and teen recreation coordinator, while Mary Sherman serves as part-time adult and senior recreation coordinator for the Calistoga Recreation Department.