

Jan. 14, 2022

ANOTHER CENTURION

Emma Mazzola celebrates
100 years young on Monday.

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HIKING THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL ONE STEP AT A TIME FOR

2,650 miles

By Jacob Tucker

Tribune Sportswriter

2,650 miles stand between the Mexican and the Canadian borders along the Pacific Crest Trail. What might be a daunting task for the vast majority is simply “a walk through the woods” for Bryan Henry, a retired gynecologist at St. Helena Hospital, who currently resides in Angwin.

Henry was given the 4,350th starting position for 2020, as only 50 thru hikers, those hiking the entire trail, are permitted to begin the PCT hike per day. The southern terminus is in the small border town of Campo, Calif., where they would begin their journey, giving Henry a May 18 start date. He set his retirement from the hospital to take place just three days prior.

Henry was accompanied for the first 1,100 mile portion of the hike by his grandson, Jasper, a junior at St. Helena High School. Jasper only left the trail to attend to school matters when they reached Echo Summit, where the Pacific Crest Trail and the Tahoe Rim Trail coalign in the Sierras.

The two actually had to be ushered off of the trail near Quincy, Calif. at mile 1,267 as the North Complex Claremont-Bear fire had broken out. The team was forced to hitchhike around to Chester at mile

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COURTESY PHOTO

The Henry “pod” of Bryan Henry, 71, and grandson Jasper take a quick photo break during their 2,650 mile trek along the Pacific Crest Trail.

Omicron dominates Napa cases

■ “We’re in a sea of red, just like most of California,” says public health officer

By Pat Hampton

Tribune Publisher

Rattling off statistics on testing, hospital capacity, viruses, masks and new guidelines from federal and state health officials, Napa County Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Relucio on Tuesday told the county’s Board of Supervisors, “We are in a sea of red, just like most of California.”

Omicron was detected in California on Dec. 1. It multiplies 70 times faster than the delta variant or the original COVID-19 virus, Relucio told the supervisors. “One person can infect 3-5 people at a time, and the reproductive rate is definitely higher than what we’ve seen in the original COVID-19 rate of 2.7, or the delta variant rate of 7. It’s possible it has a reproductive rate of 10 but information continues to evolve,” she reported. The most infectious virus is measles, with a reproductive rate of 12-15.

“New cases per 100,000 population on a seven-day average is 60 cases, the highest we’ve ever seen,” she said. “We have a 13% capacity in our ICU beds, total beds is 43% and ventilators 83%. We’ve had over 15,000 cases with 665 hospitalizations, 108 total deaths.” Relucio said.

Most cases are in the Latinx community but among those hospitalized and dying from COVID-19, most are white. There’s a 50-50 split between male and female patients, but most of those that are being hospitalized or dying are male. The virus has hit ages 20-34 hardest, followed by 0-19 years old. Most of those hospitalized are 55 years and older while those dying are mostly in 65 and older, especially in the 85 years-plus age group.

Relucio said people who are not fully vaccinated are 72% more likely to test positive for COVID-19 and 95% more likely to get hospitalized and 97% more likely to die of COVID-19. The average age of those who are hospitalized and unvaccinated is 61 years, and 74 years for

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City council to make county an offer to purchase the entire Fairgrounds

■ City attorney asked to prepare an offer for all 70 acres on N. Oak St.

By Pat Hampton

Tribune Publisher

Following a two-hour closed session Tuesday night, Mayor Chris Canning announced that the city will make a new offer to the county to purchase the entirety of the Napa County Fairgrounds.

The news came out as a reportable action taken by the five councilmembers during closed session.

“The council has given direction

to the city attorney to prepare an offer for the acquisition of the Napa County Fairgrounds,” Canning’s statement reads.

It is the first tangible movement towards purchasing the land in the last two years.

“We’ve always said we want the whole thing,” Canning said. “This is still going to take awhile.”

In 2016 the city appointed an ad hoc committee to discuss the creation of a Joint Powers Authority with the county to jointly operate the fairgrounds. By 2018 the city decided to focus on purchasing some or all of the fairgrounds without a joint

authority but with a shared revenue plan.

The county withheld the golf course from purchase discussions and instead offered the fair property, Calistoga Speedway, Mt. St. Helena RV Park, and several other buildings on 34.3 acres for roughly \$7.7 million in “as is” condition. During due diligence the city found some \$2 million in significant infrastructure needs for the property.

In May 2020 due to unprecedented financial impacts from the pandemic outbreak, the city and county

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Commissioners pick Cooper as new 2022 planning chair

■ Wilkes will take up vice chair role again

By Pat Hampton

Tribune Publisher

Scott Cooper will continue his role as chair of the Planning Commission and Tim Wilkes retained his seat as vice chair at Wednesday’s election meeting.

The election of the two roles was the only action item on the agenda.

New commissioners Richard Kaiser and Michael Vaughn were welcomed by the full commission.

Kaiser is a winemaker, restaurant owner, financial planner and certified public accountant.

“I am cutting back on my accounting practice and want to become involved in the community,” Kaiser stated in his application for a two-year term. “Through my accounting practice I have worked with several developers and city governments. With my ownership of property and businesses in Calistoga, I will be able to provide

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