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Lincoln Avenue bridge project on schedule

By Granville Fox
Tribune Reporter

Construction on the Lincoln Avenue Bridge, which began in June and was projected to last two seasons, is currently on schedule with Caltrans officials hoping both spans of the bridge will be open to traffic as early as next fall.

“The feeling is that everything is on schedule but the big wildcard is the weather,” Caltrans Public Information Officer Vince Jacala said this week.

Caltrans crews have had the eastern span of the nearly 100-year-old bridge blocked off during the demolition that has taken place thus far, while keeping the western span open to two-way traffic. Now that demolition has been completed, reconstruction is underway.

The next big step is the installation of nine steel girders that will act as the main support beams for the new bridge.

“We are looking forward to getting this first phase wrapped up,” city Public Works director Mike Kim said.

Installation of the girders is set to take place on Nov. 28 and could potentially end up shutting down bridge traffic entirely for one night,

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Fire scare makes Thanksgiving sweeter



Soroptimist Mary Ellen Hester, left, and S-Club member Ebony Castillo serve meals at the Soropomist International annual senior Thanksgiving lunch Wednesday at Calistoga High School.



S-Club’s Citlali Montanez, Amanda Cevallos and America Montanez prepare to serve pumpkin pie.



Special guests, l to r, Lauren Rolfe, Dylan Feik, Lynn Goldberg, Diane Dillon, Sen. Bill Dodd.

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

Just over one month since a storm of destructive wildfires upended thousands of lives, Calistoga residents dining at the annual Soroptimist Club’s Senior Thanksgiving Luncheon on Wednesday said they are especially grateful this year.

“Our town stands. And our homes stand. We’re blessed,” said Sandy Cesario, a Rancho de Calistoga mobilehome park resident who has lived in town for 18 years.

“I’m just very grateful for everything,” said Cesario’s neighbor, Ana Armijo. “I’m so thankful for the wonderful food on days like this, and that they help out low-income people like myself.”

Wednesday’s luncheon, prepared this year by Calistoga High School culinary students, marks the 51st year the local Soroptimist club has served a free Thanksgiving meal to senior residents.

This year, Calistoga Affordable Housing president and mobile-home park resident Larry Kromann took the opportunity to hand out special awards to Sen. Bill Dodd and the people who supported his

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Fire donations pouring in Calistoga Fire, Rotary sponsoring Upvalley funds

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

The Calistoga Firefighters Association, which is donating proceeds from tomorrow night’s Bingo & Raffle event to fire victims, got a huge jump-start on its fundraising effort this week.

Bald Mountain Developers and Alcion Ventures, partners in the development of a new, multimillion-dollar luxury resort on Silverado Trail in Calistoga, showed up at Station No. 1 Tuesday with a check for \$100,000 for the fire relief effort.

“We’re thankful for the awesome defense the Calistoga Fire Department provided during the October wildfire, and we want to help those who weren’t so lucky to escape unscathed,” said Bald Mountain’s Kelly Foster, who along with Victor Cortes, vice president of development for the company, presented the check to Calistoga Firefighter Association



Bald Mountain Development’s Victor Cortes, far left, and Kelly Foster, center left, present a \$100,000 check for fire relief to Calistoga Firefighters Association president Jason Tamagni as mayor Chris Canning looks on.

president Jason Tamagni.

Tamagni said other individual cash donations toward the organization’s fire relief effort have been coming in the mail ahead of tomorrow night’s fundraiser.

As of Tuesday, those donations amounted to about \$10,000. Some 550 tickets to tomorrow night’s Bingo event at the Napa

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Bennett Lane property is ground-zero in legal fight over fire liability

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

A 10-acre property just three miles north of Calistoga is ground zero for the growing legal battle over who, if anyone, is liable for the start of the most destructive wildfire in California history.

Fire investigators trying to determine the cause of the Tubbs Fire, as well as that of several other blazes that last month ravaged parts of Sonoma, Napa, Lake and Mendocino counties, have been looking at Pacific Gas & Electric Co. power lines as one possible ignition source. Their investigation, however, continues and while they have not released the cause or the precise point of origin of the Tubbs Fire, they believe it started in the vicinity of 1128 Bennett Lane.

The property is owned by 89-year-old Ann Zink, who was at her part-time home in Indian Wells in Southern California on

Oct. 8, the night the Tubbs Fire broke out. Her Bennett Lane three-bedroom home built in 1946 burned to the ground.

At issue is a Pacific Gas & Electric claim that the Tubbs fire may have been started by electrical equipment not owned or installed by the company.

“Preliminary investigations suggest that this fire might have been caused by electrical equipment that was owned, installed and maintained by a third party,” PG&E attorneys wrote in documents filed last week with the Judicial Council of California, the policymaking body of California courts.

PG&E did not name the third party, and provided no evidence supporting its claim other than referencing an electric incident report that it submitted to state regulators in the wake of the fires.

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