

# Calistoga Tribune

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## September 1928 fire costly for its day

**By Dean Enderlin**  
For the Tribune

*Note: This article is the third in an ongoing series on historic Calistoga fires by Dean Enderlin. Articles on the Sept. 19, 1964 Hanly Fire and on two September 1945 fires originally appeared, respectively, in the Sept. 19, 2014 and Oct. 12, 2018 issues of the Tribune.*

Like several disastrous, and now historic, fires that would follow it in years to come, the wildfire of 1928 started in the month of September, thought to have been sparked by a careless campfire or discarded cigarette. It began Wednesday, Sept. 19, as a small grass fire on a knoll on the Chapin F. Tubbs ranch, east of Highway 29, above the intersection with Tubbs Lane.

The fire was quickly contained by a crew of 50 men from neighboring ranches but then came the

*See FIRE on page 6*



TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

**The City Council on Tuesday voted to bring its old World War II air raid siren out of storage and install it atop Mt. Washington near the city's 1.5 million gallon water storage tank to use as a warning in case of emergency, such as fire or flood.**

## City bringing back old siren, adding 3 more

**By Kim Beltran**  
Tribune Editor

Calistoga will soon have four emergency warning sirens, including one that sat atop the Calistoga Fire Station for decades before it was removed and placed in storage in 2010.

The City Council on Tuesday approved a budget adjustment in the amount of \$100,000 in order to reinstate the old World War II-era siren as well as purchase three new ones that will be placed throughout the city for use as an emergency warning system.

"We don't view this as a fire alarm system but as an emergency notification system as we could be faced with floods, fire, earthquake, or other natural disasters or even some man-made ones," city manager Mike Kim told the council. "

"Any system we're talking about is just a component of a larger notification system," he added. "We're not going to try and program the sirens for different events, it's just that you're put on notice that something is happening so please seek other media notifications either the radio, the Internet or watch for your Nixle alerts because that's our primary push back out to the community."

Tuesday's discussion in front of a standing-room only crowd came on the heels of a proposal by a local company to pay for and install not only five warning sirens atop telecommunications towers disguised as trees but also a state-of-the-art early detection system.

Community opposition, however, led

*See SIRENS on page 6*

## Lincoln Avenue Brewery taps into the local flavor

**By Pat Hampton**  
Tribune Publisher

In a way it seems fitting that when the Lincoln Avenue Brewery opened its roll-up door for business Friday night, it was the start of the weekend-long celebration of the Louie Vermeil Classic sprint car races.

Race fans, locals and drop-ins visited over the weekend to sample the crisp, golden onion rings, tender spiced chicken wings and hot pizza bites pushed out by chef Nate Pintor. Bar manager Marquette Whitten and assistant manager Jasmine Pochini handled the very long tower of 25 colorful beer taps, which features four of the new

pub's brews made in association with Barrel Brothers Brewing in Windsor.

Rick Downey, one of three partners who own the new brewery and eatery, serves as president of the company and is a retired sprint car driver. Downey raced at the Calistoga Speedway from 1985 to 1991. He never won a feature race here but finished second twice and captured four straight trophy dash wins in 1987.

"We had a nice opening weekend and I believe most of the people were pleased with our place and the products we served,"

*See BREWERY on page 12*



PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

**The Lincoln Avenue Brewery crew, left to right: Alonzo Lombardi, general manager, Marquette Whitten, bar manager, Rick Downey, president, and Damon Gault, executive chef.**

## Williams addressing violations

**By Pat Hampton**  
Tribune Publisher

City Councilman Don Williams said this week that he believed he had complied with General Plan and zoning ordinance requirements when he allowed a wood furniture business to rent and operate in a warehouse he owns on Washington Street.

The tenant, Paul Block, owner of Wine Barrel Furniture, was forced to stop work on Aug. 13 when city officials visited the site and found him to be in violation of a 1990 use permit as well as operating in substandard building conditions.

Williams said he received the official notices of violation, dated Aug. 23, last week and would consult with Block about how best to comply with their requirements.

"There is no question safety is important," Williams said in a written statement he brought to the Tribune on Tuesday. "If

codes or interpretations are found to have changed in such a way that his permitted use of the space is in question, I will, of course, work with city hall to resolve the issue."

Deadlines for compliance are Sept. 27 for health and safety, building and fire code violations, and Sept. 23 for use permit infractions. One of the use permit breaches occurred when Williams allowed Block to use the building for manufacturing furniture, as the site was approved for only storage and an office. Also included in the Notice of Use Permit Violations were citations for improper storage of sawdust, a combustion hazard, and wood materials, products and equipment being stored outside the structure.

A second "Notice of Violation and Order to Repair or Abate Substandard Building

*See WILLIAMS on page 12*



**City Councilman Donald Williams said this week that he will work with both his tenant, Paul Block, and city officials to address several use permit and building code violations issued for a warehouse he owns at 515 Washington St.**

## Racetrack fight lands one man in jail, another in the hospital

**■ Aug. 25 drunk driver takes out tree; hiker dies from injuries from fall**

**By Kim Beltran**  
Tribune Editor

A fight following Saturday night's sprint car races at the Napa County Fairgrounds landed one man in jail and another in the hospital.

According to Calistoga Police Chief Mitch Celaya, officers responded to a call about a fight in the pit area of the racetrack around 1:30 a.m. Sunday.

There they found the victim, 33-year-old Brian Richard (hometown unknown), who sustained significant injuries to his face

after being punched several times by the suspect, Jose Alfredo Gonzales, 28, of Oakley.

Gonzales, identified by several witnesses, had fled the area and locked himself inside an RV on the fairgrounds property, Celaya said.

Officers were able to talk him into coming out but "he wasn't very cooperative" and he was arrested for battery with significant injuries – a felony – as well as obstructing an officer and resisting arrest, the chief said.

Gonzales was booked into the Napa County Jail while Richard was transported via ambulance to a local hospital, although which

*See FIGHT on page 12*