

# Calistoga Tribune

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## ▼ CLASSROOM FACELIFT?

Calistoga school trustees begin update of master facilities plan

BELOW

## ► TASTINGS APPROVED

Planning Commission OKs wine, beer for guests at Sam's Store

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## ◀ TOURNAMENT RECAP

CHS girls win Gene Duffy title, boys take fourth after two losses

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PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

## Cheers to the holidays!

A group of friends from San Francisco in town Saturday for the Lighted Tractor Parade raise their glasses of wine in a toast as they take refuge from the rain inside Picayune Cellars and Mercantile on Lincoln Avenue. See Pages 8 and 9 for colorful images from the weekend's holiday activities.

## Hospital birth center closing

By Pat Hampton

Tribune Publisher

Calistoga mothers will no longer be able to give birth at St. Helena Hospital as of Jan. 11, 2020, when the Family Birth Unit is closed for good, hospital officials announced Wednesday.

Generations of local children, many who grew up calling the hospital “the San,” have been delivered at the hillside facility in Deer Park, some six miles away.

The Adventist Health St. Helena board of directors made it official at its meeting Wednesday morning and released a statement later that day.

The unit's 10 full-time and seven part-time employees, some nurses who had worked in labor and delivery

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## PG&E generators being removed from substation

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

Pacific Gas & Electric Company is preparing this week to remove from its Highway 29 substation the 14 cargo-container-sized diesel generators that have powered most of Calistoga through at least four Public Safety Power Shutoffs this year.

The generators, installed last April to provide power while PG&E upgraded transmission lines, are being cleared of mechanical liquids, such as gas and oil, and a sound wall built to mute the noise must be dismantled before the machines are hauled away.

“We kept them in place to support the safety work in the area and keep customers supplied with electricity during months that typically experience high temperatures and during times when we initiated a Public Safety Power Shutoff,” PG&E spokeswoman Deanna Contreras told the Tribune via email Wednesday.

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## Foothill/PFR traffic light could be installed in summer

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

City officials Wednesday night unveiled the design for phase one of a traffic signal project at Petrified Forest Road and Foothill Boulevard, and said they hope to see it installed by late summer of next year.

Calistoga Public Works senior engineer Hamid Heidary told about 30 residents gathered at a public meeting that

environmental work under the California Environmental Quality Act for the \$650,000 project has been completed, a design team hired and PG&E put on notice for installation of the electrical infrastructure that will be needed at the site.

Heidary and team are working to file an encroachment permit application with Caltrans and to submit a state grant application by the end of the year, he said. Grant monies would be award-

ed next March, the engineer said, and combined with about \$100,000 in Napa Valley Transportation Authority funds, would cover \$530,000 of the cost of the project. Calistoga would contribute about \$100,000.

“We wanted to come up with an interim design to improve that intersection that was fairly simple and not too expensive,” said Heidary. “We are

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## School district updating facilities plan with an eye toward modernizing classrooms

By Kim Beltran

Tribune Editor

The Calistoga Joint Unified School District has enough classroom space at both its elementary and junior/senior high school campuses to accommodate student capacity for at least the next six years, consultants working to update the district's Master Facilities Plan said this week.

Most of the facilities housing those classrooms were considered to be in moderate to good condition following an initial assessment, said Tim Haley of Integrated Educational Planning and Programming, or IEP2, one of the consulting firms assisting the district with the project.

The classrooms, however, aren't necessarily designed for 21st century learning, and there may be other facilities needs that should be incorporated into the master plan.

To flesh out the needs and wishes of the school community, Haley and his team, which includes a second education facilities consulting firm, SchoolWorks Inc., spent Tuesday and Wednesday meeting with focus groups for input.

They met with school trustees Tuesday afternoon before hosting the first of at least two public meetings later that evening to gather input from interested parties.

At the meeting with trustees, Haley and one of his IEP2 associates laid out the process they will use to update the district facilities plan, and provided projections about future student population based on available demographic information.

SchoolWorks' Ken Reynolds said that using city planning information he determined that 141 of a potential 334 new housing units would be built over the

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PHOTO BY CLARK JAMES MISHLER

## HONORED WINEMAKER

Calistoga resident Francoise Pechon was named the San Francisco Chronicle's 2019 Winemaker of the Year this week. Formerly winemaker for Araujo Estate from 1993 to 2013, she is now a consultant, making wines for Heimark, Cornell, Accendo, Matt Morris and Piedra Hill, in addition to Vine Hill Ranch, plus a small label, Drinkward Peschon, which she co-owns with her best friend, Lisa Drinkward.