

Calistoga Tribune

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Friday, Jan. 29, 2010



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Complete schedule on
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CHS basketball teams on the
road to face RVC tonight **12**

County to explore creation of special district allowing added tax of visitors

Individual cities can choose whether to participate in plan to assess two percent for an overnight stay

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

Napa County supervisors voted unanimously to move ahead on the

formation of a Napa Valley Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) this week.

The TBID, if approved by lodging owners and each city, would levy a two

percent assessment on room rentals. The money raised would be poured into tourism promotion, with 1.5 percent going into a county fund, and the remaining 0.5 percent staying local.

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Housing committee IDs all potential sites in city

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

Calistoga must provide 100 new residential units to meet its "fair share" of the Bay Area's housing needs over the

next seven years – on paper at least.

To do so, a citizens committee appointed by the City Council has been meeting to update the

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Ad-hoc panel up to its neck in water info

Rate increase talks move to 8th meeting

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

The citizens committee charged with recommending water and sewer rate increases to the City Council was awash in numbers Tuesday, and, based on some of their comments, overwhelmed and frustrated.

Part of the confusion came from 70 minutes of public comment at the beginning of the two-hour work session as several residents – some claiming insider knowledge of the city's water and sewer systems – asked questions, gave advice on ways to save money and leveled accusations of mismanagement in the way the departments are run.

That, coupled with a detailed report outlining how the city's current six-tiered water use rate structure is being reformed to five-tiers, left a lot to be absorbed by the seven-member panel, as well as those residents in attendance.

"Some of what has been brought up isn't in the realm of what this committee is charged with reviewing," said member Larry Kromann, who suggested that a "comprehensive, strategic study of our water systems" be launched.

Kromann also pointed out that

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Break in weather breath of fresh air



PHOTOS BY MICHELLE WING

Kindergartners at Calistoga Elementary School finally got to romp and play outdoors Tuesday for the first time in days after being forced to remain inside at recess due to rain. Emanuel Santiago and Lupita Garibay take a turn at the tire swing, while Francisco Alvarado looks on.

Teachers, kids thrilled to get outside



Vassalisa Makarova-Wysock, Ivan Guzman, Luis Montañez and Harper Biagi raced on their trikes.

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

After a week and a half of indoor recesses, the exuberance of the kindergartners out on the playground Tuesday could be heard a block away.

"When they go out at recess, it's like jailbreak," said kindergarten teacher

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Council to hear update on budget, union talks

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

Discussions with city employee unions about ways they can help alleviate Calistoga's budget deficit are continuing, City Manager Jim McCann said this week, and he will give update the City Council on that progress when it meets Tuesday night.

McCann said Bill Mushallo, the city's Administrative Services director, will also present the latest revisions aimed at balancing the 2009-10 budget. The Council learned last fall that, due to economic conditions, the city was facing a \$425,000 deficit. After a

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New bistro hearing on back burner

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

The hearing for Romeo Vineyards' conditional use permit and design review to allow for a new bistro on Lincoln Avenue has been continued until the Feb. 10 Planning Commission meeting.

Owners Frank and Eugenia Romeo previously received permission to open a wine sales and tasting facility in the 600 square foot structure on Hazel Street, with interim wine tasting in the existing single family home at 13224 Lincoln Ave. while renovations were underway.

When the Romeos discovered they would have to add a commercial kitchen to meet California Uniform Retail Food Facilities

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Going green: Restaurant composting in works

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

Restaurants in the valley are going green in a new way, with a little bit of help from Upper Valley Disposal and Recycling (UVDS).

For the last several months, UVDS has been working with area restaurants on a pilot food waste composting program. Solage in Calistoga, and downvalley's

Mustard's, GoFish, Cindy's Back Street Kitchen and the Rutherford Grill are collecting all of their perishable food waste and handing it over to UVDS, who in turn is transforming it into loamy, organic compost.

UVDS community relations director Christy Abreu said, "We're pretty excited about this. We're making a usable, viable byproduct that can be used in gardens."

So will consumers soon be able to put their own kitchen waste right into their green bins? Abreu said although that's definitely hoped for in the near future, there are still a few kinks to be worked out of the process.

Abreu said the containers for the waste need to be air tight, and completely free from spillage. Since the containers currently in use have a metal bar in them, it

broke the seal. UVDS order special 64 gallon carts from Europe. But then that caused another problem: the new carts didn't fit the automated arms on the garbage trucks.

Abreu said they are currently refitting the trucks. In the meantime, they are offering Monday/Wednesday/Friday pickup that is

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