

Calistoga Tribune

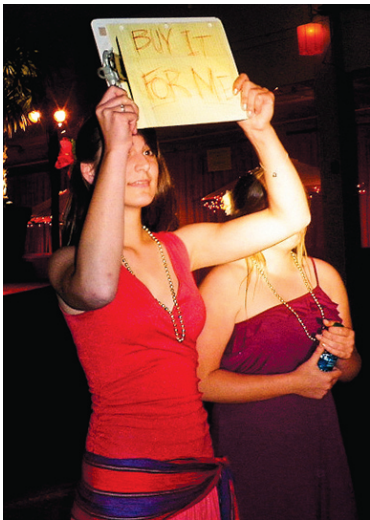
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Calistoga High School senior Laurel Oetker-Kast, above, expresses her desire to have the auction lot of six tickets to teen singing sensation Justin Bieber's concert at Oakland's Oracle Arena in July.



PHOTOS BY KATE STANLEY

CALISTOGA EDUCATION FOUNDATION AUCTION

Attendance, proceeds off from previous years but generous donors give \$74,000

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

The Calistoga Education Foundation (CEF) Auction was small but mighty this year, bringing in \$74,000 for school kids thanks to a generous core group of supporters.

The 157 attendees bid exuberantly on lots ranging from a golf date with Robert Pecota to a Cedar Street Wine Crawl, urged on by the irrepressible Calistoga Chamber executive director Chris Canning in his role as auctioneer.

The Tubbs Building was transformed into a Latin marketplace, thanks to the wizardry of event chair Kate

Stanley. Auction goers were greeted by ballet folklorico dancers, and treated to sumptuous Hispanic foods, and, of course, lots of good wine.

CEF president Connie Johnson said, "Everyone who was there had a lot of fun. It was very prettily decorated, and we had great lots this year. It was a good audience, and everyone was there to have a good time and donate money in the process."

The attendance, and the money raised, are much less than in past years. Just four years ago, in the record year of 2006, the CEF auction had an attendance of 350 people and raised \$207,000.



Rachel and Geoff Davies of Calistoga, left, were on hand pouring their own wine, Stelareese during the silent auction event. Above, Ballet Folklorico dancers entertain the live auction crowd.

But, as Johnson noted, that was then. "I'm happy with \$74,000. It's a rough economy. The community stepped up and to me, that's what's

most important. I'm just glad we made money and that everyone is still helping."

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Local nursing home closing in one month

Residents' families seeking new facilities; 40 employees affected

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

Calistoga Gardens Nursing Center is closing its doors next month, and financial difficulties may be to blame.

Although employees are under strict orders from top management not to discuss the closure, word began spreading this week after residents' family members were told the news.

Virginia Christian, whose husband, Bobby, has been a resident at the nursing home since November 2009, said Calistoga Gardens administrator Chris Geyer told her personally last Friday – a day after employ-

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Council gets first look at water rate increases

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

The City Council got its first look this week at what Calistoga residents will be paying for water and sewer services the next five years.

Tuesday's study session was a precursor to public hearings in June at which the Council will formally adopt rate increases expected to take effect in August.

Council members had little to say, and the mood was grim, as city staffers explained how a citizen's panel, guided by finance director Bill Mushallo, arrived at a set of recommendations for both water and sewer

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English-learning students on pace with state average

By Michelle Wing
Tribune Staff Writer

Calistoga English learners are keeping pace with state averages, as about 40 percent of them are testing at the two highest levels of proficiency.

According to the latest California English Language Development Test (CELDT) results, released on Friday, seven percent of Calistoga Elementary School (CES) students tested at the advanced level, and 30 percent tested at the early advanced level, for a total of 37 percent in the top

two tiers.

At Calistoga Junior Senior High School (CJSHS), one percent tested at the advanced level, and 39 percent tested at the early advanced level, for a total of 40 percent in the top two tiers.

This compares to a state-wide result of 9.1 percent of English learners testing at the advanced level, and 30.7 percent testing at the early advanced level, for a total of 39.8 percent.

CES principal Michele Treuscorff said, however, that

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Taking on noisy riders no easy task

Meeting offers little solace to residents impacted by roar of mufflers

By Kim Beltran
Tribune Editor

The thunderous roar of motorcycle engines shattering the peace and quiet of their rural home is nothing new for Calistogans Don and Anne Scott. It's so bad, Don says, he often has to keep his windows closed in summertime and even then, the glass reverberates and conversation is impossible.

Scott has tried in the past to rally city officials to act on the matter. He has asked law enforce-

ment officers to cite the offenders, but the problem has only gotten worse.

On Monday, Scott and eight other area residents met with county supervisor Diane Dillon, Calistoga Police chief Jonathan Mills and top brass from Napa's California Highway Patrol office to find out what, if anything, could be done.

The news was disheartening for the residents, who were told the best way to tackle the issue is through legislation that would put some teeth in a state vehicle

code prohibiting excessive noise easier. As it is now, enforcement is difficult because of demands on police personnel, the need to use sophisticated testing equipment, and the transitory nature of the offense. (By the time police respond to a complaint, the offender – and the noise – are usually long gone.)

Passing tougher motorcycle laws, however, means going up against a nationwide coalition of motorcycle groups who band

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