

# Calistoga Tribune

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## Thompson, Dodd, local officials honor first responders, address fire concerns

■ Inside: Historian Dean Enderlin recalls long-forgotten wildfires of 1945, which also destroyed acreage and homes in the Mt. St. Helena environs and beyond.

■ Also: Part 2 of Michelle Hickman's diary of life after losing her home in the Tubbs Fire.

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By Kim Beltran  
Tribune Editor

Local, county, state and federal leaders came together in Calistoga Tuesday night to mark the one-year anniversary of a Northern California firestorm responsible for some 44 deaths and billions of dollars in damage across four counties.

Led by state Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, officials acknowledged the fire's victims, thanked the first responders who helped

them and shared with those in attendance lessons learned and actions taken to prevent such a disaster from happening again.

"We've made some strides but there is much work yet to be done," said Dodd, who convened the Fire Prevention Forum and Remembrance Ceremony, held at the Calistoga Community Center and attended by some 75 residents.

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PHOTO BY KIM BELTRAN

State Sen. Bill Dodd, left, and Rep. Mike Thompson, right, presented commendations Tuesday to California Highway Patrol helicopter pilot Pete Gavitte (next to Thompson) and his flight officer, Whitney Lowe. The two men repeatedly risked their own lives to fly trapped residents off of Atlas Peak in Napa the night/morning of Oct. 8 and 9, 2017.

## CALISTOGA HOMECOMING



PHOTO BY KIM BELTRAN

Juniors Laila Elkesen and Hayseel Bar-rera (above) smile as they walk in Calistoga High School's 2018 Homecoming parade the afternoon of Oct. 5. Seniors Abad Cuenca and Katherine Rojas (at right) were crowned king and queen at halftime of the football game, held later that evening. See Page 9 for more photos and Page 10 for game story.



PHOTO BY CLAUDIA ACEVES

## CHS students struggle to meet English, math test standards

By Claudia Aceves  
Tribune Reporter

Newly-released academic test results reveal that a majority of Calistoga students are struggling to meet grade level benchmarks for math and English language arts.

Only 11 percent of high school juniors met or exceeded state proficiency standards in math, and 49 percent met or exceeded the standards in English language arts (ELA).

Among seventh and eighth graders who took the tests last spring, 55 percent met or exceeded the standards in ELA, while 25 percent met or exceeded the standards in math. Thirty-eight percent of elementary students met or exceeded the standards in math while 41 percent hit the proficiency mark in ELA.

Educational Services Director

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## New senior planner joins staff at Calistoga City Hall



Zack Tusinger began working as Calistoga's new senior planner on Oct. 1. He and his wife moved to California from Missouri and now live in Santa Rosa.

By Claudia Aceves  
Tribune Reporter

Zack Tusinger has been hired as the city's new senior planner.

He will make his first public appearance at a Planning Commission meeting in two weeks.

Tusinger was hired to replace Kevin Thompson, who accepted a job closer to home with the city of Cloverdale. The new planner's first day in Calistoga was Oct. 1. So far, he said, he's been working to get up to speed on city projects and become familiar with the community.

"It's a cool little place to be,"

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## Off-duty FBI agent makes assist in capturing suspected Cal Mart thief

By Claudia Aceves  
Tribune Reporter

A visiting, off-duty FBI agent helped Calistoga police nab one of two men arrested last week on suspicion of shoplifting from Cal Mart.

Later the same night in an unrelated incident, police arrested a Calistoga man on several weapons related charges. The next day, Thursday, Oct. 4, an Antioch woman was arrested in Calistoga for fraudulent credit card charges.

Jose Cabeza, 24, of Madera, and Mark Novella, 28, of Fresno, were arrested and charged with misdemeanor shoplifting of less

than \$500, said Calistoga Police Sgt. Tim Martin. They were booked at the Calistoga Police Department and released. Both are expected to appear in court on Nov. 5 to address the charges against them.

Cabeza, who was on parole, and Novella were employed in construction at the new Four Seasons luxury resort being built on Silverado Trail northeast of town. Both men had been spotted on Cal Mart video surveillance footage stealing bottles of liquor in the days prior to their arrests.

Cal Mart manager Bill Braddock said suspicions of theft were raised when store employees

noticed missing items during an inventory check, which led them to watch the surveillance videos from the previous day.

Cabeza, said Martin, was seen going into the store three times that day, twice during one trip, and taking a bottle of liquor each time. Novella was seen entering the store once at a different time and also stealing a bottle of liquor.

Braddock said on the day of the arrest, Cabeza ran out of the store when employees recognized him as he was attempting to shoplift again. Multiple store employees

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