

Calistoga Tribune

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PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

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"I love doing it. I do it for the kids."



PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

Gary Costa is still adding to his light display in the front yard of his home at the corner of Reynard and Lake streets. He does it to give back to the community and because children and their parents enjoy it so much.

Costa family wraps home with spirit of Christmas

By Amanda Rhodes
Tribune Staff Writer

The Costa family has been decking out their home on Lake St. with festive decorations for the past 18 years and this season their holiday tradition continues to grow.

Gary Costa is the man behind the lights. His goal: get bigger, brighter and better each year.

"I love doing it. I do it for the kids," Costa said. He added that the little ones around the neighborhood keep him on his toes and always notice when part of the décor isn't up just yet.

Costa says he usually begins his set-up around Nov. 25th of each year. He does it all himself and doesn't let a little rain get in the way.

"It's somewhere in the thousands I imagine," Costa said of his light collection.

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Car chase starts here, ends in Napa

■ Thief drives 100 MPH down Silverado Trail

The driver of a car stolen early Saturday morning in Calistoga led police on a high-speed chase through the valley and ended in Napa with the arrest of the suspected thief with the help of a police dog.

The incident began when Calistoga residents in the 1800 block of Lake St. called police around 2:30 a.m. Saturday morning to report that they heard someone drive away in their blue 1990 Honda CRX, according to the Calistoga Police Department.

Calistoga Police Sgt. Tim Martin said he and a St. Helena police officer were on the lookout for the car when one that matched the description sped by near Deer Park and Hwy. 29 where Martin was parked.

According to Martin, officers tried to pull the vehicle over south

See **CHASE** page 2

Community Chest needs donations

■ Charity sets goal of \$25,000 for annual drive

By Pat Hampton
Tribune Publisher

If charity begins at home, the Calistoga Community Chest is hoping Calistogans will take a moment to help reach its annual goal of \$25,000.

Chest treasurer Jim Hanson said letters soliciting donations went out in early October to every Calistoga household. So far, a little over \$20,000 has been raised this year. In the 40 years Hanson has been a part of the Community Chest, the non-profit has raised and dispensed \$800,000 to local non-profits.

The Calistoga Community Chest provides money to the Creative Living Center, Calistoga Sober Grad Night, Calistoga Cub Football, Calistoga Little League, Holiday Giving Programs, Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, Hospice of Napa Valley, Calistoga Youth Soccer and Calistoga Girls Softball, among others.

In addition, the organization

See **CHARITY** page 12

Tank Garage winery joins parade of local tasting rooms

By Tony Poer
Tribune Staff Writer

A break in Napa Valley's rainy weather brought thousands of people out to Lincoln Avenue three weekends ago for the annual Calistoga Lighted Tractor Parade, with several dozen dropping by before and after the popular event for wine, soup, and s'mores at the

city's newest wine attraction.

The parade festivities were something of a coming-out party for Tank Garage, the vintage gas station-turned-tasting room and boutique winery that sits in the former Wine Garage location at the intersection of Lincoln and Foothill Boulevard. As the sun went down, a pair of fire pits glowed in front of the sleek build-

ing's signature roll-up door. To both parade-going families and the simply curious, the scene at the newly refurbished, 1930s filling station signaled that something unique had arrived at the gateway to the city.

Business partners Jim Regusci and James Harder, wine industry veterans behind the nearby T-Vine Cellars' contemporary tasting

room, have created a place that is shiny-new and decidedly retro all at once. For a winery with a very small footprint, a lot of pieces had to fall into place to make it happen.

"I got a call one day from my partner, Jim [Regusci], who always has his ear to the ground,"

See **TANK GARAGE** page 7

Calistoga News

TANK GARAGE

Continued from page 1

said Harder recently, explaining Tank Garage's origins. "He said, 'You know the old Wine Garage up the road? It's becoming available.' And I said, 'Well, that's interesting.' So I drove up to take a look at it."

"The place had always intrigued me because of the gas station," he confessed.

A native of Alberta who has worked in Napa Valley since the late 90s, Harder met Jim Regusci in 2000. Not long afterwards, he and his wife, Colleen, purchased a 10-acre property near the Regusci Winery in north Napa. The couple hired Regusci, a respected grower and vineyard manager, to plant vines for their own estate, James Cole Winery. Around the same time, Regusci hired Harder as sales and marketing director for his winery. The two men eventually went into business together, then founded—and sold—a successful portfolio of value-driven California wines, and with a third partner, Chuck Easley, bought the late Greg Brown's T-Vine label, which had been one of Calistoga's cult brands since the mid-90s.

In 2013, with the help of Petaluma architect Steve vonRaesfeld, Harder and his partners transformed the Rainbow Ag property just south of Tank Garage into a modern, farmhouse-style complex for the sought-after T-Vine wines. This was, as it turned out, just the beginning of changes to Calis-



PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

Tank Garage Winery's roll up doors welcomes wine tasters to the "lubrication bar."

toga's gateway.

"We went to work [on Tank Garage] and applied with the city. They really liked what we had to offer," Harder recalled. "There's a very concerted effort to make that area a lot more appealing to tourists. And they liked what we were doing with T-Vine. We got full support and sailed right through the hearing."

Earlier in his career, while still in Canada in the 1990s, Harder had visited a converted garage winery in Walla Walla, Washington. While he has since forgotten the name of the quirky facility, he never let go of the idea that such

a uniquely retro concept might do well in California, with its combination of Art Deco and automotive aesthetics.

"The thing about the Wine Garage that always appealed to me was the old gas station part," he reiterated. "So I grabbed my architect one day, and we walked in there and I said, 'Ok, it's a little bit rustic, but let's look at some vision. What if we could restore the old station and make that the primary focal point?'"

In addition to the throwback design, a key component to Harder's plan for the space was the unexpected bonus of a California

02 winegrowing license, courtesy of the Wine Garage's previous owner, Todd Miller. He and Regusci made sure to grandfather the license into their new lease so that Charles Hendricks, the longtime winemaker at Regusci Winery, could debut a lineup of unusual white and red wine blends under the Tank Garage label.

But before any winemaking or tastings could occur at the site, the partners had their work cut out for them. "It was a very extensive renovation" said Harder. "It took us a year and a half or almost two

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PERSIMMONS

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Following the recipe I used my fine sieve over a large basin and slowly oozed the precious flesh through the metal frame. When a persimmon is ripe, it readily gives of its gooey pulp, but when the timing is too soon, no amount of coaxing will release the fruit.

I decided to keep the discarded tops in order to track how many persimmons I'd used, a note Martha would have been proud of. I proceeded through the multiple recipe steps, measuring spices, chopping pecans, dicing candied ginger and simmering golden raisins in cognac noting that prep time on the recipe had been omitted.

Again the recipe seemed to lack directions, so I took my chances and filled the molds nearly to the top aiming for a perfectly molded pudding. Snapping the lids over the molds I gently lowered each one into its waiting steam bath.

Simmering two molds for three and a half hours on an archaic stovetop was the last frontier.

After lengthy pot watching supplemented with sips of wine I gave my husband the job of lifting out the two molds and setting them on a rack on the counter. The following evening when our epic dinner party came to a close, I felt my culinary talents had graduated to the next level as I proudly looked across the table at the row of clean dessert plates. Every guest had taken a second helping. I guess the proof of the pudding really is in the eating!

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The event is FREE and open to everyone.

When: Wednesday, January 7, 2015

Where: Well Now Showcase
1200 Main Street | St. Helena, CA 94574

Time: 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

What to bring: Bring your CA ID or driver's license. Bring for each family member applying proof of current income*, U.S. passport, legal resident card or certificate of citizenship or naturalization documentation

Know for each family member applying their birth dates, social security numbers and home zip code

* Proof of current income of all family members applying (A dependent's income should only be included if their income level requires them to file a tax return.) A family is defined as the person who files taxes as head of household and all the dependents claimed on that person's taxes. If you don't file taxes, you can still qualify for free or low-cost insurance through Medi-Cal.
** Families that include unlawfully present immigrants can apply. You can apply for your child even if you are not eligible for coverage.

Calistoga News



PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

Tank Garage winery owners Jim Harder and Jim Regusci decorated a Model A pickup for the Lighted Tractor Parade.

TANK GARAGE

Continued from page 7

years to complete.”

The original gas station connected to the Wine Garage retail shop was, as Harder described first seeing it, “basically an old, condemned tin can” of a building. It was similar to other service stations of the 1930s that were designed by oil companies to be quickly constructed around the country. Like the ’29 Ford Model A that occasionally resides in front of Tank Garage (and was featured in the Tractor Parade), the old Calistoga gas station was a mass-produced thing. And yet, like that vintage pickup truck, it made an industrial design statement.

“It’s interesting,” he said. “It dates back to the late ’30s, those streamlined, art deco gas stations were developed by a Texas architect for, I believe it was, the Shell Corporation. And they wanted something that could just bolt together and be easily developed all around the U.S. They were very iconic with the cantilever and the art deco feel.”

“Our architect said it was structurally sound, like how they had designed those things.” Then he laughed. “But by today’s standards, it was a tin can with holes in it.”

After signing a lease in 2013, Harder and Regusci officially launched the project, with an initial goal of 1000 cases of Tank Garage white and red wines sourced from Napa Valley and

other North Coast vineyards. Charles Hendricks and his South African assistant winemaker, Bertus van Zyl, have managed the production at Regusci Winery’s facility. And with the 02 license in place, they even crushed a ton of Frediani Vineyard charbono on-site during this past harvest. The winemaking takes place in a back room—or rather a “back-back” room, as it’s situated behind a private gathering space that during prohibition would have been considered a speakeasy.

It was far from a speakeasy atmosphere on the evening of the Tractor Parade. Many locals and visitors poured into Tank Garage to sample esoteric wines with

proprietary names such as “Dive Motel” (a 2013 pinot blanc-sauvignon blanc-semillon blend) and “Where I Come From” (2011 cabernet-merlot-syrah) while their children roasted s’mores over the fire pits outside and played around the pair of beautifully restored, 1940s gasoline pumps that Harder tracked down in Georgia.

“It looked like a very nice turnout, and the weather was cooperating, for sure,” observed Angel Perez, the chef at Regusci Winery who cooks for events at all of his bosses’ wineries. He served a bright orange, exotically spiced squash soup from vegetables grown at Regusci. Perez was happy to point out that his soup was enjoyed by many of the grownups, and even a few adventurous children, before the parade.

While he sipped a glass of “Not Fade Away,” a cabernet blend inspired, perhaps, by a Grateful Dead show or two, Chris Reiter bought a dark mesh truckers hat with “Tank” emblazoned across its front. The health insurance executive from Sonoma patiently answered a reporter’s questions about his thoughts on the hat. “It’s a new hat,” he offered. “It’s pretty darn cool.”

Reiter was enjoying his first Tractor Parade with his wife and kids, as well as his first Tank Garage experience. “I think it’s unique, obviously, for Calistoga,” he said. “With so much old world charm you have up here, it’s kind of a retro type of tasting experience. I think it fits the town really nicely.”

Perhaps most importantly, he mentioned that he also found the wines to be delicious.

“Our whole philosophy at Tank is blending interesting things,” Harder previously explained. “My instructions to Charles and Bertus are get creative, have fun, and make a really good-tasting, drinkable wine. I’m never going to say they can’t do this or shouldn’t do that, as long as it’s unique and interesting.”

More than a little out-of-the-box thinking by the Tank Garage partners has helped them get this far. And with the security of a long-term lease and no plans to ever repeat a bottling blend or label design, they are limited only by their own imaginations.

“Jim and I agreed that we don’t need to open another little farmhouse winery,” Harder said. “Napa doesn’t need another cave winery or another chateau. The uniqueness of the garage, and then getting some inspiration from vintage California, that’s what inspired us to do this.”

“It’s kind of fun and different.”

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
By The Calistoga City Council

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the City Council of the City of Calistoga that a **PUBLIC HEARING** will be conducted on **Tuesday, January 6, 2015** at or after 7:00 p.m. in the Calistoga Community Center, 1307 Washington Street, City of Calistoga, California, at which time and place testimony will be considered on the following matter:

2014 Housing Element Update of the Calistoga General Plan (GPA 2014-3) This update is required by the State of California and provides a long-term, comprehensive plan to address the existing and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community.

Under Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the proposed Housing Element Update is not subject to CEQA because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that it could have a significant effect on the environment.

The final draft Housing Element Update is available for review online at www.ci.calistoga.ca.us. Copies are also available at the Planning and Building Department office located at 1232 Washington Street.

Beginning Friday, January 2, 2015, no later than 4:30 P.M., the staff report for this item will be available online at www.ci.calistoga.ca.us by clicking the City Council meeting on the City Calendar, and at the City Administrative Offices located at 1232 Washington Street. For additional information, please contact Lynn Goldberg at 707-942-2763 or lgoldberg@ci.calistoga.ca.us.

NOTICE: If you challenge the City’s decision on this matter in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing. Judicial review of any City administrative decision may be heard only if a petition is filed with the court not later than the 90th day following the date upon which the decision becomes final. Judicial review of environmental determinations may be subject to a shorter time period for litigation, in certain cases 30 days following the date of final decision.

BY ORDER OF THE CITY OF CALISTOGA CITY COUNCIL
 Kathy Flamson,
 City Clerk, City of Calistoga
 December 26, 2014

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BY THE CALISTOGA CITY COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the City Council of the City of Calistoga that a **PUBLIC HEARING** will be conducted on **Tuesday, January 6, 2015**, at or after 7:00 p.m. in the Calistoga Community Center, 1307 Washington Street, Calistoga, California, at which time and place testimony will be considered on the following matter:

Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZOA 2014-4: Consideration of a Municipal Code Amendment to repeal and replace CMC Chapter 17.37, Second Dwelling Units, in order to delete regulations that constrain the development of second units, and delete redundant and unnecessary provisions and wording.

The proposed amendments are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines.

NOTICE: If you challenge the City’s decision on these amendments in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing. Judicial review of any City administrative decision may be heard only if a petition is filed with the court not later than the 90th day following the date upon which the decision becomes final. Judicial review of environmental determinations may be subject to a shorter time period for litigation, in certain cases 30 days following the date of final decision.

Beginning Friday, January 2, 2015, no later than 4:30 p.m., the staff report for this item will be available online at www.ci.calistoga.ca.us by selecting the City Council meeting on the City Calendar, and at the City Administrative offices located at 1232 Washington Street. For additional information, please contact the City Clerk’s office at 707.942.2805.

BY ORDER OF THE CITY OF CALISTOGA CITY COUNCIL
 Kathy Flamson
 City Clerk, City of Calistoga
 December 26, 2014