

# First Reading Of Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance

## By wstockwin@hughes.net

The first reading of a proposed city ordinance requiring abatement of hazardous vegetation, and establishment of defensible space occurred in front of a sparse audience at the February 26, City Council meeting.

The council was also shorthanded as council member Burruss was unable to attend the meeting. Following a presentation by CalFire Battalion Chief Brian Eagan, and subsequent comments by the public and council members, the first reading passed on a unanimous 4-0 vote.

The second reading of the ordinance will be on the next council agenda and, if passed, would require all parcels of real property within City limits to establish defensible space of 100 feet around the main structure on each parcel by removing all hazardous vegetation and combustible materials.

The ordinance would also require:

• Abatement of hazardous vegetation and combustible materials within 10 feet immediately adjacent to roadways serving as primary ingress and egress routes.

• All trees, hazardous vegetation and ladder fuels within defensible space areas to be pruned and removed to a minimum height of 15 feet above the ground.

• Removal of tree limbs extending to within 10 feet of a chimney or stovepipe.

• Removal of all climbing vines from trees and structures.

• Maintenance of all vegetation adjacent to or overhanging a structure free of dead or dying wood within a 10-foot distance from the structure.

Underscoring the threat hazardous vegetation poses, Chief Eagan said that in 2018, a total of 7,571 vegetation fires burned 1.8 million acres in California, caused 150 fire fatalities, and destroyed 22,703 structures.

Lessons learned from that kind of devastation include:

• 93% of structures without 100 feet of defensible space that ignite due to wild land fire are burned and destroyed.

## continued on page 3



Footings being poured for the Colfax Best Western Motel. Photo by Alan Shuttleworth



# The Mayor's Corner

## Mayor Marnie Mendoza

# The Mayor Salutes The Colfax Bunco Babes

Carmen Vargas started the "Colfax Bunco Babes" (CBB) group in March of 2015. The group meets once a month to play Bunco (the dice game), laugh, enjoy, and indulge in snacks and a drink or two.

Carmen, a working nurse, had on several occasions sponsored local children in need and approached the group about reserving their game "winnings" to go towards local kids in need at Christmas time.

Eventually, they adopted three kids and sponsored them during the Holidays as a "Secret Santa." Gifts were purchased, wrapped and given to the parents to put under their tree.

In May 2016, a friend from Auburn heard of a young boy with cancer in the Bay Area who wanted a trampoline. Once the CBB heard of this, they took over \$300 out of their reserves, then bought and delivered the trampoline to him. The remaining funds went to sponsor six local kids for Christmas, allotting \$125 per child.

In 2017, the CBB sponsored 15 children in need with a random donation from the community of \$160 to be included with the funds the CBB had raised each month they met throughout the year.

In 2018, the CBB assisted 19 local kids in getting a joyful surprise from Santa on Christmas day. Community involvement grew as the Railhead Saloon and the Colfax Lionesses generously donated to the worthy cause. After the horrific fire in Paradise, CBB adopted a devastated family and donated \$400 towards their Christmas.

In 2019, the CBB raised over \$1000 and had 28 kids to sponsor, when the need for 14 additional kids came to light. That's when the nurses that worked with Carmen stepped in and donated towards 21 more kids. Then the local schools were contacted, and they gave the CBB a list of

children in need to utilize the extra funds. As the word got out, the CBB received many generous donations, again, from the Railhead Saloon, and the Colfax Lionesses.

Three days before Christmas, a family didn't have the means to buy presents for their three chil-



The Colfax Bunco Babes. Photo and article by Sarah Murphy

dren. Then even more donations were generated from Utopia Tattoo, Weimar Store, the Wandering Wardrobe, plus miscellaneous community members and Carmen's co-workers. The CBB provided the family with a surprise visit from Santa, thanks to Wendy Dion who did the last minute shopping. So what started as 28 kids to shop and wrap gifts for ended up being a total of 77.

Also, in 2019, the CBB joined the Holiday Season window painting project, and Kim Faitz, Fran Waldo and Ashley Baldwin won an Honorable Mention for their artful display on the Railhead Saloon's windows.

To date, the CBB has 28 members ranging from 20-to-90 years old, including (in no particular order), Carmen Vargas, Kim Faitz, Julia McFarland, Fran Waldo, Denise Helling-Brooks, Debbie Watkins-Kell, Mandy Ludington, Staci Webb, Karen Larrabure, Ashley Nichole Baldwin, Tesia Brooks, Susan Rue-Ray, Momma Liz, Wendy Dion, Gwen Helling, Char Pippen Baker, Carrie Conyers, Liana Elliott, Emilie McCall, Annie Wickwire, Leslie Jensen, Cathy Layton, Marti Furtado-Hoskins, Caroline McCully, Tawyna Hanson Martinez, Susan Allen, Sandra Liu and Sarah Murphy.

# Ordnance from front page

50-66% of structures burn due to "ember cast" (burning material blown out in front of the fire).
33-50% of structure ignitions are triggered by radiant heat.

Before complaint-driven enforcement goes into effect next year, there will be educational workshops, and CalFire visits to neighborhoods and individual properties. Chief Eagan said that CalFire statistics show that 80% of first visits are compliant properties.

He also said that firefighters would not engage structures that don't have 100 feet of defensible space.

Enforcement of the ordinance will begin on January 1, 2021.

# In other council business:

• The city finance director, Laurie Van Groningen, gave the council a mid-year budget report that showed the city to be solidly in the black.

• The council unanimously approved sending Mayor Mendoza as the city's representative on the Sacramento Region team for this year's "Cap to Cap" lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. on April 25-29.

Earlier in the day the entire council attended a cannabis workshop to discuss proposed amendments to the city's existing cannabis ordinance. No consensus was reached on setback requirements for cannabis businesses, or on whether to allow adult-use retailers in Colfax. There will be another cannabis workshop on March 25.

# Contents March, 2020



- **Cover -** First Reading of Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance / Council Meeting
- **Page 2 -** Mayor's Corner Salutes the Fabulous Colfax Bunco Babes
- Page 5 Trump Budget Targets Long-Distance Trains
- Page 6 Chamber of Commerce Notes and Events

Page 7 - Business Briefs / It's Dry Out There

Poppies on the Stevens Trail in spring, by Alan Shuttleworth



**Colfax Connections** is a monthly publication edited by Will Stockwin, who can be contacted via e-mail at **wstockwin@hughes.net**. All submissions are welcome, the earlier the better. Deadline is the 20th of the previous month.

> STAFF Photography – Alan Shuttleworth Proofreading – LindaLou Haines

Copies of Colfax Connections can be found at City Hall, the Library, and the Railroad Museum.

Digital copies can also be found on the Chamber's Website at (www.ColfaxChamber.com) and on the City's Website at (www.colfax-ca.gov).



FUNDRAISER BENEFITTING LOCAL YOUTH GROUPS SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH 2020 5 PM ~ 11 PM SIERRA VISTA COMMUNITY CENTER 55 SCHOOL STREET COLFAX, CA 95713 TICKETS \$50

To purchase tickets please visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/colfax-green-machines-13th-annual-crab-feed-tickets-88564822769

# Trump Budget Takes Aim At Amtrak Long-Distance Trains



## The California Zephyr arriving in Colfax.

### By wstockwin@hughes.net

As with the previous three years, the Trump Administration's proposed 2021 budget has again set its sights on Amtrak long-distance train service as part of a 19% overall cut in the Department of Transportation's annual funding.

Under the proposed budget funding for Amtrak's long-distance trains would be cut in half, dropping to \$611 million from 2020's \$1.3 billion funding level.

In 2019 a total of 4.5 million passengers traveled on Amtrak's 15 long-distance routes.

This time, instead of eliminating long-distance train service in a single budget cycle, the proposal is to "restructure Amtrak's long-distance network, phasing decision making and cost responsibilities to states" over a four-year period.

That would be accomplished by re-routing federal support of long-distance rail service through what the budget calls "National Network Transformation Grants."

Those grants would provide 100%, 80%, 60%, and finally 40% of federal operating funds through the four-year period.

By 2025, responsibility for funding long-distance train service would be transferred entirely to the states.

Trump Administration budgets have proposed similar cuts in the past, but after hearing loud opposition from constituents,

## Photo by Alan Shuttleworth

Congress has rejected them all. Contact information is provided below for those wishing to add their voices to the discussion.

#### **Senator Diane Feinstein**

San Francisco (415) 393-0707 Washington (202) 224-3841 https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/ public/index.cfm/e-mail-me

Senator Kamala Harris San Francisco (415) 981-9369 Sacramento (916) 448-2787 https://www.harris.senate.gov/contact/email

Congressman Doug LaMalfa 2399 Rickenbacker Way Auburn, CA 95602 (530) 878-5035 https://lamalfa.house.gov/contact

Rail Passengers Association (202) 408-8362

# Colfax Chamber of Commerce Notes and Events

Welcome from your Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, February 4th, we kicked off the month with our Coffee and Conversation meeting, featuring our new Colfax City Mayor, Marnie Mendoza.

Mayor Mendoza gave a presentation describing her ideas, outlook, and goals for Colfax. A few items she wants the council to focus on are improving roadways and city infrastructure, funding city youth activities with partnership programs, and increasing the safety of our community by creating Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to assist fire and law enforcement.

Many of our business members' questions and concerns were answered not only by Mayor Mendoza, but by our past Mayor, Joe Fatula, Councilman, Kim Douglass, and City Manager, Wes Heathcock.

Mayor Mendoza is looking forward to working together with her City Council team. This was a very well attended meeting, and we encourage all businesses, nonprofit organizations and associates to join us every first Wednesday of the month.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 4th, 8:00 AM at the Colfax Area Chamber office, 99 South Railroad Street, Colfax.

Our Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting and Luncheon will take place on Wednesday, March 25, 11:30-1:30 at Shang Garden Restaurant. At this meeting our Chamber's businesses, non-profit organizations, and associate members will vote for new Board members. We have four openings for new Board members, and at this time we have six candidates applying.

Also, the Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce and The Auburn Journal will present the "Scoop Thurman Community Service Award" at this meeting. This award was established in 2008 and is given annually to a Colfax area resident, or residents, who make a difference in our community.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend your Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce annual meeting and luncheon, where you have a chance to view what is happening with your Chamber, meet and greet members, enjoy an excellent lunch and share your thoughts and ideas.

Your Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce is finalizing our 'Mixer' dates and hosting businesses for the rest of the year beginning in April. Planning is also being completed for a presentation from PG&E to discuss possible power outages in 2020 and how we can be prepared.

Please visit our Website, www.Colfaxchamber. com, for more information and event listings, or call 530-346-8888.

### Tim Ryan, CACC President

# **AARP Safe Driving Classes Offered**

Colfax United Methodist Church is hosting two AARP Safe Driving classes in spring 2020.

The first scheduled class is a 2-day, 8-hour "Initial" class for the drivers who have never taken the AARP class previously or has not taken the class in the past three years. It will be Thurs, Mar. 5 and Fri, Mar 6, 10 – 2:30 pm at Colfax Methodist Church.

A 4-hour 'Refresher' class is offered for those who have taken the initial or refresher course within the last three years. It is scheduled for Wed, May 13, 10 am – 2:30 pm. It, too, will be held at Colfax United Methodist Church.

Either driving course costs \$15 for AARP members, \$20 for non-members and is limited to 25 attendees. Checks should be made payable to AARP or exact cash.

Please bring: glasses, pen, and a brown bag lunch if desired (microwave available) for class. Coffee, tea, water and snacks are provided.

# Business Briefs with LindaLou Haines

• Who likes to eat? Hands raised? Mine too. **GRANDMA C's KITCHEN** is a bakery opening in early March at 30 N. Main. Local owner Cyndee Schwartz will be serving Espresso & speciality teas and her own baked cookies, like the ones now available at MarVal. Plus, her own breads, cakes, pies & more. Also, she will be offering gourmet items from exclusive vendors. Days: Tues. to Sat. with hours starting at 8 am to 2 pm. Over time, hours will depend on customer demand. So folks, you know what that means: Get in there & support our newest Colfax business. Belly up to the bakery case! 530-320-0570.

• A reminder that on-going Free eWaste Recycling is available at **SIERRA SELF STORAGE**, 160 Sherwood Ct., off S. Auburn St. Mgr. Pam Bristow has been providing this service for the last five years and explained that it is a fundraising effort for local non-profits. Over that time her business has donated over \$11,000 to these organizations. She says she is "working for a better environment!" Donations are accepted Mon. through Sat. during regular business hours. To check on hours, call 346-7256. Their website lists the guidelines on what is accepted & what is not: https://www.sierrastorage.com/about/ ewaste.html.

• Watch for exciting happenings at the old Crispin Cedar plant on S. Auburn in these coming weeks. Something BIG is moving in there. **BE CHANGE, LLC** manufactures "The World's Finest Expedition Truck Campers." Those things are HUGE, believe me. How's that for little ole Colfax!

If you are starting a new business or are offering a new service or hours to an existing business, please email me:

lindalouhaines14@gmail.com

# Daffodils Make Us Smile, Despite Bone-Dry February

wstockwin@hughes.net

Daffodils and almonds are in bloom everywhere, but I hope we aren't done with winter just yet. Over at Downtown Farm at the end of Pine St. we have recorded zero rain in February, which means we will enter March with a scant 20.7" of precipitation for the wet season to date.

For some context, we had 44.6" in the bucket at the start of March 2019. In 2018 we had 23.7"; in 2017 we had 78.7"; 2016 we had 35.4"; and in 2015 we started March with 32.9".

Averaging 2015-2019 season totals on March 1st computes as 43". Using that number means we are currently 22.3" off the five-year average. 2017 was the year we finished the season with 98.2", however, so if we drop 2017 as a soggy anomaly and go with a four-year average we are still running a 13.5" deficit.

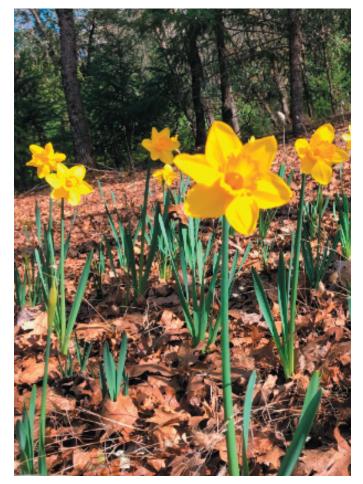


Photo by Alan Shuttleworth



**Every Wednesday,** Baby Lapsit 10:30-11:00

**Every Thursday,** Toddler Time 10:30-11:00

**Every Friday,** Preschool Storytime 10:30-11:00

March 26th, Book Club Meting 5:00-6:00

March 27th Family Movie Night 3:00-4:30

**March 31st** Breakout Tuesday 3:00-4:30

Library Hours 10 Church St.

Wed.- Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Tuesday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Closed Sunday & Monday

> Main Desk 530-346-8211



Ghosts of Gold Mountain by Gordon Chang

> March 26th 5:00-6:00





# VFW & AUXILIARY #2003

# "Catch the Green" of St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

Adults – \$20, Children under 12 – \$5 Children under 5 – Free

Seating limited to the first 110 People (Take-out dinners available) Tickets purchased at the door will be \$1 more

# Saturday, March 14, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.

No Host Happy Hour, 6 – 6:30p.m.

Proceeds benefit local Youth Educational & Scholarship Programs Fantastic Raffle Baskets and Adult Casino Opportunity Drawings



For Tickets/reservations by March 12 call:

Carol (530) 346-9573

or

Beth (530) 637-4893

## Churches

Colfax Assembly of God Community Fellowship 252 Culver St., Colfax, CA 95713 Email: colfaxaog@gmail.com Website: http://www.colfaxagca.org/

Colfax Baptist Church 24850 Ben Taylor Rd., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-8110 Email: pastorgaryhoward@yahoo.com Website: http://colfaxbaptist.com/

Colfax United Methodist Church 59 W. Church St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-2267 Website: https://www.colfaxumc.org/

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witnesses 944 Canyon Way, Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-2525 Website: https://www.jw.org/en/

St. Dominic's Catholic Church 589 E. Oak St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-2286 Website: https://www.scd.org/parish/ st-dominic-parish-colfax

Seventh Day Adventist 454 Scholtz Ave., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-8844 Website: https://www.colfaxsdachurch.com

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 1875 S. Auburn St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-7702 Website: https://www.lds.org/

## **Social Organizations**

American Legion Post 192 22 Sunset Dr., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-9433 Website: http://norwellpost192.org

Colfax Area Chamber of Commerce 99 S. Railroad St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-8888 Website: http://colfaxchamber.com Colfax Area Historical Society Archives: PO Box 185, Colfax, CA 95713 Museum 99 Railroad St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-8599 Website: https://colfaxhistory.org

Colfax Garden Club PO Box 1801, Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-7474 Website: http://californiagardenclubs.com/content/colfax-garden-club

Colfax Lions Club PO Box 664, Colfax, CA 95713 530-477-2533 Website: https://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/colfaxca

Gold Country Lionesses PO Box 1852, Colfax, CA 95713

Illinoistown Clay-Mason Lodge #51 of Colfax 14 N. Main St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-6627 Website: http://lodge51.freemason.org

Salvation Army Service Unit 320 S. Canyon Way, Ste.A, Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-2722

Sierra Vista Artists 55 School St., Rm. C-4, Colfax, CA 95713 530-320-0433

Sierra Vista Center 55 School St., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-8726 Website: https://sierravistacolfax.wordpress.com

Soroptimist International of Colfax PO Box 475, Colfax, CA 95713 530-637-4878

VFW Post 2003 22 Sunset Dr., Colfax, CA 95713 530-346-7768 https://www.colfaxveterans.org/vfw.html

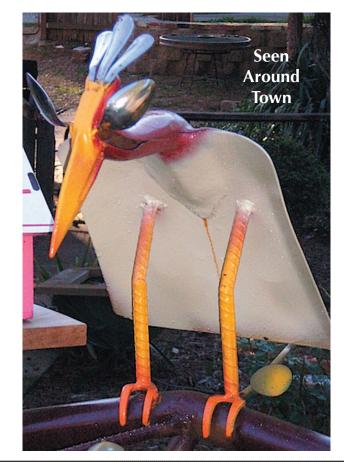


# March 2020

- 1- Bingo, 1:00-5:00 p.m. SVC (Sierra Vista Community Center) 2 - Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC 3 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 4 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 6 - Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC 9 - Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC 10 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 11 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 11 - City Council Meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall 13 - Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC 15 - Colfax Food Train, 1 p.m. SVC 16 - Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC 17 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 18 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 19 - American Legion Dinner, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Colfax Veterans Memorial Hall 20 - Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC 21 - Flea Market, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. SVC 23 - Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC 24 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 25 - City Council Meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC 27 - Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC 30 - Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC 31 - Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC **April 2020**
- 1- Coffee and Conversation, 8:00-9:30 a.m. Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC (Sierra Vista Community Center)
- 3 Nevada County Foodbank, 10:00-11:30 a.m. SVC Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC
- 5 Bingo, 1:00-5:00 p.m. SVC
- 6 Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC
- 7 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC
- 8 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC City Council Meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall
- 10 Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC
- 12 Pancake Breakfast, 8:00-11:00 a.m., Veterans Hall
- 13 Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC

Colfax Connections is also available digitally on the City Website at www.colfax-ca.gov, and on the Chamber of Commerce Website at www. colfaxchamber.com

- 15 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC
- 17 Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC
- 20 Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC
- 21 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC
- 22 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC
- 22 City Council Meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall
- 24 Badminton, 9:00-11:00 a.m. SVC
- 27 Badminton, 6:00-8:00 p.m. SVC
- 28 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC
- 29 Open Art Studio, 1:00-4:00 p.m. SVC



Colfax Connections can be found at the library, Lumenaris, the Railroad Museum at the train depot, and at City Hall.

**Events Notices** Please contact Will Stockwin at **wstockwin@hughes.net** with notices of your upcoming events in the coming months so they can be included in the Colfax Connections Calendar of Events. Notices can also be left at City Hall.