Colfax Connections

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.

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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 children. 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.

The Colfax Bunco Babes. Photo and article by Sarah Murphy

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.

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March, 2020

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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).

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. **Photo by Alan Shuttleworth**

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, 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

Colfax Library

MARCH EVENTS

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

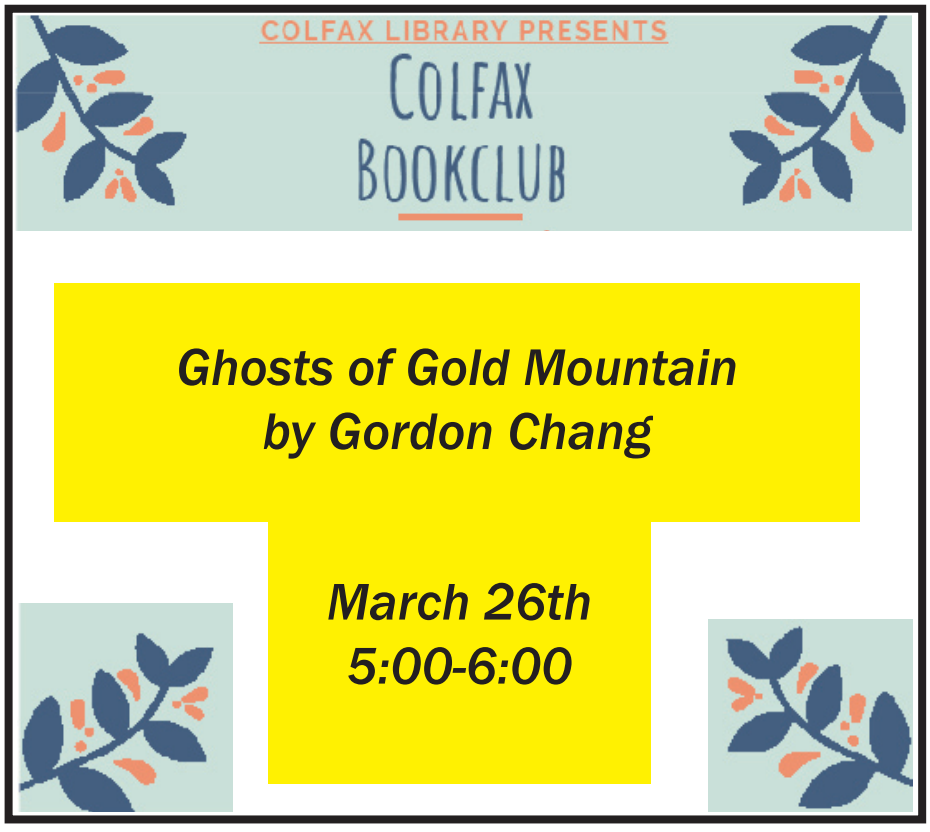
Library Hours
10 Church St.

Wed.– Sat.
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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

Closed
Sunday & Monday

Main Desk
530-346-8211



March Madness

Colfax Jr. Falcons Football & Cheer

25% OFF REGISTRATION IN MARCH

Football: $225
(ages 5-14)

Cheer: $225
(1st - 8th Grade)

Cheer Mascots: $112.50
(ages 4-6)

Visit our website colfaxjrfalcons.org

Register in person at one of our Registration Nights listed below:

Scoops on March 3rd, March 17th, March 31st 5:30PM-8:00PM – Get a free Scoop!

Blondie's on March 4th or March 18th 5:30PM – 8:00PM - $1 off No Weigh!

Email: president@colfaxjrfalcons.org or registrar@colfaxjrfalcons.org

Prices shown are for registration in March, amounts will increase after March
Cheer also requires $60 for Practice Shirt, Bows, and Hoodie (that you keep)
Ask about Sponsorships and Payment Plans

Call/Text: Brad Collier (530) 220-0266 or Jaclyn Collier (530) 401-7021

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

Calendar of Events

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
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.**

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

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.