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Full report page D6

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Monday, December 24, 2012

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Christmas in Naples



YOUR BUSINESS — A4

Napa County
home sales listing

THE SPORTS PAGE — B1

Martinez to play
for Idaho



NVC to crack down on course repeatability

Policy takes effect statewide

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Community members who take personal enrichment courses at Napa Valley College will likely feel the impact of a new state mandate that restricts course repeatability.

Beginning in fall 2013, Napa Valley College students will not be allowed to repeatedly enroll in courses they could previously take up to four times.

The changes primarily focus on enrollment in physical education, performing arts and visual arts classes.

The new regulations will prevent students from repeating a credit course that they have already completed with a satisfactory grade — which is typically a D or higher by state standards, or a C or higher for students majoring in that particular field of study.

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors approved the regulations earlier this year. This is a state man-

date that Napa Valley College is legally required to follow.

The primary impact will be felt by community members — also referred to as “lifelong learners” — who take physical education or arts courses for their own enrichment.

Kevin Luckey, dean of physical education and athletics, said that the college has added P.E. classes to help make up for the loss of repeatability. The classes that have been added are more advanced so that they comply with the new law.

Weight training, for

example, is one of the more popular P.E. courses at Napa Valley College, and students have been able to repeat it up to three times. Beginning next fall, the class will no longer be repeatable, so the college has added an intermediate level of weight training that’s more advanced.

Unlike P.E., the offering of visual and performing arts courses will largely remain unchanged.

Erik Shearer, chair of the Arts and Humanities Division, said Napa Valley College knew these changes were coming several years ago and started

eliminating repeatability in certain arts courses.

“It’s not as big of a deal here as it is with other colleges,” Shearer said, adding that lifelong learners make up a small percentage of students in P.E. and art.

Lifelong learners may still take more expensive fee-based courses through the college’s non-credit community education program — but there are limited offerings and many of those classes take place at the Upper Valley campus.

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TOP 10: 2012

10 Jameson Canyon widening begins

9 Napa Local vs. Starbucks

Local-first advocates rally against corporate caffeine

Downtown Starbucks location brews controversy, debate

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In 2012, drinking a cup of coffee in downtown Napa became a political act.

As soon as word spread in late 2011 that Starbucks might set up shop at the corner of First and Main streets, coffee aficionados and non-coffee drinkers alike took sides that only grew stronger this year.

On one side were those who said the coffee giant had every right to open in the heart of downtown and would attract other businesses to an area with a 20 percent retail vacancy rate. They touted free choice and free enterprise.

On the other side were those who said Starbucks was playing dirty by trying to open within a stone’s throw of a veteran downtown coffee shop, Napa Valley Coffee Roasting Company. They wanted downtown Napa to be home to one-of-a-kind, locally owned businesses attracting both locals and visitors.

A grassroots group named Napa Local sprang up and began petitioning the City Council to adopt an ordinance that would strictly regulate which businesses could open in downtown, making it particularly difficult for chain stores to operate there.

In January, the group made its first appearance before the council during the public comment segment of the meeting. Representatives from the downtown business community also turned out, speaking against an ordinance regulating chain stores, saying it would hurt the district and pointing out that a number of chains were already represented in downtown Napa.

The council chose not to schedule a future discussion.

As rumors of a future downtown Starbucks

See **STARBUCKS**, Page A2

Wet, windy storms pass through Napa Valley

Flooding reported in parts of county

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Napa County received a drenching over the weekend as storms brought heavy rainfall Saturday and Sunday, leading the National Weather Service to issue a flood warning for the Napa River through Sunday night.

Near Napa and St. Helena, the river was forecasted to crest 1 to 2 feet above flood stage Sunday night, with levels predicted to drop off Monday morning. That could lead to minor or moderate flooding, according to the NWS.

Winds and rains began lashing the Napa Valley on Sunday morning and continued into the afternoon, as part of a storm front that blew through the North Bay Area. The NWS issued flood watches or warnings for many of the rivers and creeks in Napa and Sonoma counties on Sunday.

Power outages were reported throughout the North Bay on Sunday, and were accompanied by reports of downed trees and power lines, a landslide covering a road on Mount Veeder, and water running over roads Upvalley.

The flood warning on the Napa River was preceded by a flash-flood watch earlier Sunday on several of its tributaries. Redwood Creek and Hopper Creek both ran above flood stage, according to water level data.

Near St. Helena, the Napa River was projected to crest at 17.2 feet, or about 1 foot above flood stage, and the NWS predicted minor flooding to occur along that stretch. It was projected to crest Sunday evening.

Near Napa, the river’s crest was forecasted to be 26.7 feet, or a little less than 2 feet above its flood stage of 25 feet, according to NWS. The NWS predicted it would crest in that stretch early Monday morning.

The NWS said the flood warnings would remain in effect until Monday, unless the agency cancels them.

See **STORMS**, Page A3



Caritina Campos, right, coaxes Carmen Ortiz as Ortiz tries to remember the equation for a math problem she is trying to solve on Thursday evening at the Puertas Abiertas Community Resource Center in Napa. Campos works as a volunteer tutoring Spanish-speaking students in a variety of subjects. She has been a volunteer with the organization since 2009. *Lisa James/Register*

Tutoring in Spanish helps immigrants learn English

Campos aids adults twice her age

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Caritina Campos has spent the past three years volunteering to give adults the opportunity her parents did not have.

Campos, 26, is a volunteer for Puertas Abiertas Community Resource Center, and though she lends her assistance to several programs, most of her time is spent tutoring adults in the Plaza Comunitaria.

The program, which she

assists with on a weekly basis, is a self-paced, online course offered through the Mexican government that helps adults improve their Spanish literacy and complete their Spanish education so they are more successful when learning English.

“My parents didn’t have the opportunity to go to school because in those days they had to work, or there were no schools in the place where they were born,” Campos said of the need for the program.

Some students are in their 20s, but most are in their 40s or 50s, Campos said. “They’re happy (to be taking the class). I can see them smiling when they learn something, when they start reading and writing.

It feels so good.”

Through the Plaza program, students can receive completion certificates in elementary and middle school levels.

“We use the Plaza Comunitaria as the first step to becoming English speakers,” said Puertas Abiertas Center Director Frances Ortiz-Chavez. “People find that it’s too hard for them to learn English because their skills in their primary language are very basic.”

Ortiz-Chavez said Puertas has only three staff members and could not serve the 500 clients it sees annually without the help of volunteers like Campos.

See **CAMPOS**, Page A2

Where is Honker? Beloved goose missing from Connolly Ranch

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A well-known Connolly Ranch resident, Honker the goose, is missing. Volunteers aren’t sure whether to suspect foul play or not.

Honker, a large white Chinese goose, has lived at the west Napa teaching ranch for years, said Manager Thom Arcadi.

“He is one of the favorites of our kids and our ranch,” he said.

Honker was discovered missing on Monday, Nov. 12.

“We don’t know what

happened, whether he was taken by some person or taken by some animal,” Arcadi said.

To add to the mystery, the same night Honker disappeared, a ram that lives in a nearby pen was injured. “Something frightened him and he twisted his leg,” Arcadi said.

Honker left no clues to his whereabouts. No goose remains were found, although some down feathers were seen nearby.

The goose was something of a celebrity to many visitors at the First Street ranch.

“Everyone knows Honker,” volunteer Melanie Oberting said. “He’s like a Connolly Ranch legend.”

The goose had blue eyes, she said. “He will eat out of your hand. He will come right up to you.”

“He was so friendly,” Arcadi agreed.

“It’s real sad,” Arcadi said. “The children of our preschool program even made a little ‘Lost Goose’ poster. They went around to show it to the other animals.”

According to Oberting,

See **GOOSE**, Page A2



This April 2011 photo captured Honker in a happier time. Connolly Ranch Education Director Michael Lauher, center, introduced Honker to students from a San Francisco elementary school. *Register file photo*

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Martha Twitchell

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