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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2017

napavalleyregister.com | 50 cents

MEOW, MEOW



J.L. SOUSA, REGISTER

Baby walks through Ella's CatHouse & Catnip Bar which was recently opened by Jameson Animal Rescue Ranch in downtown Napa. It's a place where humans and cats can meet in a relaxed environment for play and possible adoption.

Cat collective comes to town

Free-range adoption center opens its door

JENNIFER HUFFMAN
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There's a new hangout on Caymus Street in downtown Napa, and it's the cat's meow.

Ella's CatHouse & Catnip Bar is a cage-free, no-kill, cat adoption center that officially opened last week.

Ella's provides a free-range sanctuary for unwanted healthy cats and a way to identify "forever" homes for adoptable cats. It's a project of local non-profit Jameson Animal Rescue Ranch.

"Cats are often discarded or treated like no one's property," said JARR co-founder Monica Stevens. "We decided we'll open a place to give good, loving forever homes" to those animals.

Ella's is similar to cat cafes that have opened in cities like San Francisco or Oakland. However, Ella's doesn't serve up food – just a healthy dose of cat love.

Guests – up to four per hour – are invited to visit, spend cuddle and couch time and play with the cats. There is no charge for admission.

Open to the public Friday to Monday, Ella's occupies a large open office space formerly home to a graphic design business at 1009 Caymus St. It's just a few doors behind Toy B Ville on Main Street.

The "cathouse" includes comfy couches, chairs, tables, cat tree houses and a gift shop. Up to 15 cats at any one time will be in residence.

It's hard not to miss Ella's – the large front windows of the cathouse are filled with tree houses offering cat-eye views



J.L. SOUSA, REGISTER

Rita Price, center, of Yountville, pets Baby at Ella's CatHouse & Catnip Bar in downtown Napa on Friday afternoon. Price was looking to adopt a cat after her cat of 18 years recently passed away.

Ella's CatHouse & Catnip Bar

1009 Caymus St., Napa
707-501-0016

Open to the public Friday to Mon., 12 to 6 p.m.

Reservations suggested on either side of the glass.

On Monday morning, Napan Dan Castner stopped outside the window when the lounging cats caught his eye during his morning walk.

"I think it's wonderful," he said of the

cathouse. "I just love what they are doing here."

Dwinelle Coffee of Angwin visited Ella's with three other friends. Coffee was celebrating her birthday, as was another member of the group.

"I can't get enough of cats," said Coffee, who owns a number of the pets. Spending time with cats "is my favorite pastime."

"This is delightful," said her friend Eleanor Wood, the second birthday celebrant. "The purring brings my blood pressure down."

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PREPAREDNESS

Many lack quake info

Homebuyers need seismic and insurance assessments

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Many homeowners in Napa sincerely want to armor their houses against the next earthquake to strike wine country, but few know exactly how they can.

A survey of residents who endured the quake of Aug. 24, 2014 revealed a lack of clear knowledge about whether their houses had been reinforced and how much retrofitting was needed to shore up their homes, according to a report from a state-sponsored non-profit quake insurer.

The report, which the California Earthquake Authority presented Wednesday at a forum in Sacramento, is the second part of a study of the fallout from the South Napa earthquake. The earlier phase, published in 2015 before the quake's one-year anniversary, evaluated the performance of different styles and ages of construction in the face of the West Napa Fault's magnitude-6.0 awakening.

Of the more than 630 households involved in the earlier study, researchers and home inspectors visited 39 of them in March and April of 2016, combining checks of each home with interviews of the residents, wrote Sharyl Rabinovici, a disaster mitigation researcher partnering with the insurance authority.

Ten percent of those surveyed had shored up their houses before the 2014 quake, whether by adding foundation bolts, removing chimneys or building bracing around vulnerable "cripple walls" holding a house above ground level.

However, 29 percent of the homeowners did not know whether their buildings had received any seismic improvements, and others could provide only vague descriptions of what work had taken place and when. Some

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Earthquake retrofitting study

Summary: <http://bit.ly/2jKH8Tm>

Full report: <http://bit.ly/2kwLh1M>

More information: EarthquakeAuthority.com

DOWNTOWN

City nixes big building signs

Young Building isn't a notable landmark, commission decides

HOWARD YUNE
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A developer's wish to brand his downtown Napa building with bold, illuminated letters will have to wait.

Facing pushback from the city Planning Commission, James Keller on Thursday withdrew a

plan to stripe the Young Building's name – in aluminum capital letters with night lighting up to two feet high – on two sides of the office structure on Coombs and Third streets.

While Keller presented the lettering as a way to transform the building into a downtown centerpiece, officials disagreed, denying that the two-story structure is historic or distinctive enough to merit signage standing out so sharply from its neighbors.

In the end, Keller, who purchased the Young Building at 801 Coombs St. more than three years ago, agreed to pull back the building label for further review, although planners approved smaller first-floor signage for its individual tenants, which include the producers of the BottleRock music festival.

"You want to put up a fancy sign, but the building is so lackluster; it doesn't pop," said

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SUBMITTED GRAPHIC

The developer Jim Keller proposed illuminated lettering near the roofline of the 97-year-old Young Building at Coombs and Third streets in downtown Napa, but withdrew the plan Thursday amid skepticism from city planning commissioners. Planners did approve signage and lettering for individual tenants at street level.

OBITUARIES | PAGE D2

Donna Marie McCarthy, Maria Reavis, Corrine Cantrell-Shields

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