

Sunday, October 13, 2013

Napa Valley

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College offers earthquake
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THE SPORTS PAGE - B1

Vintage grad Jezycki
headed to Australia

From eyes on high, police monitor downtown

40 cameras watch
over public spaces

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Napa Police Officer Eric Thompson need not be anywhere near downtown Napa to know what's happening there.

All he needs is his cell-phone or computer.

More eyes downtown

Police install cameras on church

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Since the Napa Police Department began using surveillance cameras downtown about five years ago, technology has advanced such that an officer with access to the system can pull up live

video on his or her mobile phone, zoom in and get a clear image of a public space within the camera's sight line.

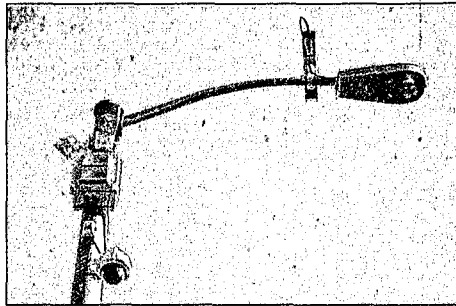
"If we were to have an officer at these locations 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it would be too costly," Capt. Jeff Troendly said. "Policing for the rest of the city would suffer. The cameras allow our

officers to watch an area passively."

More often than not, the roughly 40 Police Department cameras downtown are used to "memorialize events," meaning the camera streams are not watched all the time, but are reviewed when necessary.

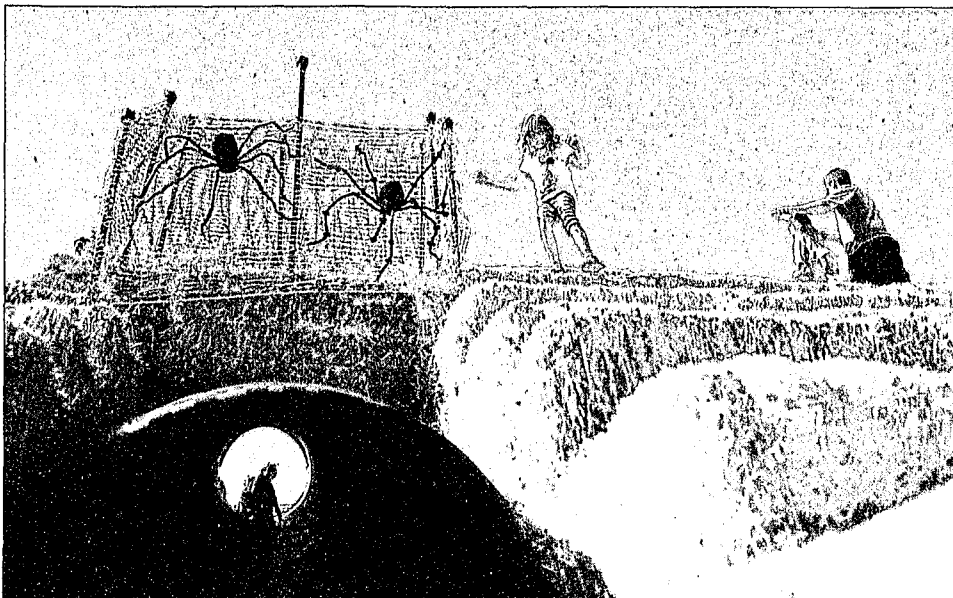
"If something occurs, an

See CAMERA, Page A7



Veterans Memorial Park in downtown Napa has many security cameras on its perimeter. J.L. Sousa/Register

GARDEN-FRESH GOURDS



A giant tube makes a slide through the pyramid of hay bales at Stanly Lane Pumpkin Patch last weekend. Local pumpkin patches are now open for business as the fall holiday season quickly approaches. Lisa James/Register photos

Jack-o-lantern joy

Stanly Lane celebrates 30 years of Halloween harvests

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One at a time, two at a time, sideways, frontwards and even backwards, they tumbled and twisted down the slide. Hollering and screaming, upon landing most scrambled right back up to the top to do it all over again.

While most people visit Napa's Stanly Lane Pumpkin Patch in search of would-be jack-o'-lanterns, on a recent afternoon it was hard to tell what was more popular, a 40-foot slide built within a giant hay bale pyramid or the pumpkins themselves.

For most Napa families and schoolchildren, a visit to one of the area's seasonal pumpkin "farms" is a holiday tradition. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Stanly Lane Pumpkin Patch, which is owned and run by Billy Wilcoxson of Napa.

"Crazy, huh?" said Wilcoxson about the anniversary. The

Inside

List of Napa County pumpkin patches

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pumpkin producer said he first created the pop-up patch to help pay his mortgage on the parcel at the intersection of Golden Gate Drive and Stanly Lane.

"Then it just kept growing and growing ever since," he said. "Now I don't even put up signs out on the road" to advertise, he said.

Wilcoxson didn't disappoint at this year's pumpkin patch, creating his biggest farm yet. Central to the fun is Wilcoxson's giant straw bale pyramid, complete with tunnels and the ever-popular slide.

Made of 2,350 bales of straw, the 30-foot-tall pyramid encapsulates a 4-foot wide,

See PUMPKIN, Page A4



A boy picks up his pumpkin after selecting it at Stanly Lane Pumpkin Patch last weekend. Local pumpkin patches are now open for business as the fall holiday season is quickly approaching.

Impacts of shutdown trickle down to Napa

Budget deal would spare worse effects

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While lawmakers in Congress and President Barack Obama continue to try to break an impasse that's left portions of the federal government shut down for almost two weeks, a wide variety of impacts have already hit Napa County residents, with more potentially on the way.

The shutdown has had immediate consequences for the county, including stalling disability claims for veterans at the Veterans Home of California in Yountville, furloughing federal workers, as well as causing closures at Lake Berryessa and a drop-off in sales at sporting goods stores because of shuttered national parks and wildlife refuges.

More on shutdown

See related story

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If it stretches on much longer, the shutdown could mean interruptions to Section 8 housing assistance payments; closures of federal courts; the blocking of aid to programs that provide assistance to needy families, such as the Women, Infants and Children program; and the prevention of student loan payments from being processed. That's not to mention the dire warnings of economic turmoil that some members of Congress are giving if the U.S. surpasses the debt ceiling, which U.S. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has said would occur after Thursday.

Veterans in Napa County have not had disability claims processed due to the shutdown, contributing to an already sizable backlog, said Ron Brand, a spokesman for the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

"If this continues, it will just get more backed up," Brand said. "They started addressing their backup. They're going to be in the same hole they dug themselves out of, which is not good for a veteran who has a claim out."

Congressional lawmakers had already pledged to shrink that backlog and expedite veterans' disability claims, but now unprocessed filings are growing by 1,400 per day, Rep. Mike Thompson, D-St.

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What wine? Some world-class pumpkins are grown here, too

Napa man cultivates 2,032-pound monster

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The Napa Valley may become known for another crop aside from its world-renowned grapes. On Saturday, a giant pumpkin from the valley set a world record during a weigh-off at Morgan Hill in the South Bay.

The pumpkin, grown for 105 days in a backyard in east Napa, tipped the scale at 2,032 pounds at the 23rd annual Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off, hosted by Uesugi Farms.

The grower, Tim Mathison,

celebrated the record with his wife, Susie, son Brian, and a dozen fellow growers from Napa.

"I was surprised. I didn't think it was going to go that heavy. ... I was very surprised and happy," said Mathison, a lumber salesman who attributed his success in part to this year's mild temperatures. "The weather was very good this year."

Growers of giant pumpkins in Napa are very supportive of one another, Mathison and others said.

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Tim Mathison of Napa broke the world record with a 2,032-pound giant pumpkin in a weigh-off at Uesugi Farms in Morgan Hill. Photo by Patty Hawkley

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