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## A year of community events

By **Rollie Atkinson**  
Sonoma West Staff

If more evidence is needed to prove how full Healdsburg's community events and celebration calendar is, just look back at how many postponed gatherings and special events had to be cancelled or rescheduled in the days after the Oct. 23, 2019 Kincadee Fire. Even Halloween trick-or-treating had to be postponed into November.

Also postponed was Corazón Healdsburg's Dia de los Muertos street festival and alter, Healdsburg's Future Farmers Country Fair Barn Dance, the annual pet-friendly Howl-O-Ween parade, a Latinx Impact Forum and more than a week's worth of local school sports games.

The annual downtown trick-or-treat evening was moved to the first Friday in November and besides costumed children with parents in tow, the streets surrounding the Plaza were filled with fire trucks and local First Responders. The Dia de los Muertos celebration was moved to the city hall parking lot and Grove Street and finally held on Saturday, Nov. 23. The HFFCF Barn Dance is being held Feb. 29, 2020 at the SRJC Shone Farm.

A few events also had to be moved on the calendar last February when the Russian River flooded. But when the weather permitted, Healdsburg residents and visitors paraded in May in the Healdsburg Future Farmers Country Fair Twilight Parade and in the pre-dawn St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Healdsburg Farmers Market held several special events including the annual Zucchini Races and Pumpkin Carving contest.

The 20th annual Healdsburg Jazz Festival drew music lovers to 10 days of performances, workshops and a film showing in June.

Another class of seniors marched across the Rec Park field for the 2019



Photo Tribune archives

**TWILIGHT MARCHERS** — If it's getting close to Memorial Day, then it is time for the Healdsburg Future Farmers Country Fair and its Twilight Parade. 4-H club members (pictured) were one of almost 100 entries in the 2019 parade held May 23. The HFFCFair culminates with a big livestock auction on the weekend where charity bidders support local youth with their agricultural and livestock projects. More than \$200,000 is raised each year.

Healdsburg High School Graduation in June and the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce hosted several business gatherings including the annual Best Business Awards at the Villa Chanticleer in August. Skip Brand of the Healdsburg Running Club and the Drew Esquivel Scholarship Fund held a series of fund raising foot races, including the annual Thanksgiving Turkey Trot that drew almost 2,000 runners.

Dotted everywhere else on Healdsburg's calendar were weekend winery events, civic club and American Legion pancake breakfasts and feeds, Tuesday in the Plaza concerts in the summer and the arrival of Santa Claus on the day after Thanksgiving.

While most of these events have counterparts in thousands of other small towns across America, the actual mix of these local gatherings, held for many years in a row, is a big

part of Healdsburg's character and popularity.

If the largest wildfire in history can only delay a few events by a week or two, there must be lots of reassuring evidence that even as Healdsburg becomes more and more expensive, people will continue to celebrate Healdsburg all year long.

To view more photos from the past year of Healdsburg events, turn to page 2.

## Supes approve plan to address homelessness on Rodota Trail

By **Katherine Minkiewicz**  
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At a special public meeting on Dec. 23, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a \$12 million plan to address the homelessness crisis along the Joe Rodota Trail. The meeting came on the heels of a Dec. 17 meeting where the board of supervisors declared "a homeless emergency" on the trail and allocated an initial \$25,000 for homeless outreach.

The \$12 million plan includes the following elements:

**Shared Housing:** In a shared housing situation, individuals have a private bedroom but share common areas. The county is considering purchasing up to six multi-bedroom houses that will serve 60 people total and can be available within 100 days or less. One-time costs would include \$5,000,000 in real estate costs, \$500,000 for the relocation of current tenants and \$50,000 in furniture costs. Ongoing costs include operation and maintenance.

**Master Leases:** In this scenario, a nonprofit would lease an entire rental property and then sublease it to people who are living on the trail. The county would subsidize the leases. This would yield six to seven units and could serve 20 individuals. Annual leases would amount to \$750,000 and would be funded with \$130,000 from reinvestment and revitalization dollars, \$120,000 from the state's Housing and Disability Advocacy Program and \$500,000 from CalWORKs Eligible Support. One-time costs would include \$60,000 for furniture, which would be funded through the county's general fund for contingencies.

**Indoor/outdoor shelters:** The county staff will identify multiple indoor/outdoor sites with room for habitable structures, safe parking and RV hook-ups. Each site will be able to accommodate approximately 40 people currently living on the trail. One-time costs are estimated at \$1,600,000 for two sites and \$480,000 for one year of operating costs. The indoor/outdoor shelters would be funded by \$3,900,000 from California's competitive No Place Like Home permanent supportive housing program and \$1,650,000 from the 2018-19 general fund.

The board decided to fast-track a request for proposals (RFPs) for indoor/outdoor shelters such as container homes and tiny houses (which are popular with homeless advocates), as well as safe parking areas at locations such as the Sonoma County Fairgrounds. (Unfortunately, people could only stay in these types of shelters, whatever form they ultimately take, for 60 to 180 days, due to constraints against using state funds for non-standard, short-term housing of the homeless.)

County staff indicated that it would take about six months to set up indoor/outdoor shelters, much to the dismay of the supervisors and many homeless advocates who hoped this element could be done faster.

**Support Services:** Social services such as counseling and addiction treatment provide homeless clients the support they need to avoid falling back into homelessness. These services will initially be offered to clients currently living on the Joe Rodota Trail, but will follow them as they are placed in shared housing or the indoor/outdoor shelters.

**Immediate action to improve life on the trail:** According to a press release from the county, to improve conditions on the trail immediately, the county is addressing pest control, placing additional hand washing stations and bathroom

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## HUSD sees year of progress, student engagement



Photo Andrew Pardiac

**WALKOUT** — Healdsburg Junior High School students walked out of their classes on Monday, May 13 in protest of math teacher Greg Costa's administrative leave. Before being placed on leave, Costa had taken a retirement incentive package from the district.

By **Katherine Minkiewicz**  
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It was a busy year for the Healdsburg Unified School District. Kindergarten classes were merged, students made progress in various benchmark tests, the district tackled inequality in schools with an equity task force and students made their voices heard when Healdsburg Junior High School teacher Greg Costa was placed on a controversial paid administrative leave in April.

This is the year in Healdsburg school activity:

2019 started out on a positive note when two Healdsburg High School

students Gissel Gomez and Janet Rodriguez, launched a clothing and toy drive for children in Tijuana.

The toy drive was part of their senior civic project, but the toy distribution process got postponed when U.S. authorities closed the busiest port of entry along the U.S.-Mexico border on Nov. 25 after members of a Central American caravan, many seeking asylum, tried to cross the border and were met with tear gas and border patrol barricades. The two were still able to make a monetary donation to the City of Angels orphanage in Tijuana.

In February the district gained ground on understanding and hearing concerns on the equity

problem in the district. Community members voiced their equity concerns at the Healdsburg Unified School District special town hall meeting Feb. 5, a meeting that was organized by the Healdsburg Equity Task Force and the Oakland-based National Equity Task Force. Several parents, teachers and staff opined that the district, specifically elementary schools in the district, are struggling with consequences of the Accelerated English learning program (AE) and with accessible school program information for Latinx families.

Also in February, the district received a top Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

accreditation. The WASC review cited several areas of strength: a rigorous academic program with various course options, a clear and concise mission statement and student learning outcomes (SLO), opportunities for teachers to collaborate and develop their work, multiple methods for tracking student benchmarks and progress and a positive school environment.

In April the district announced that Healdsburg High School will receive a brand-new gym complete with new locker rooms. The new gym is intended to replace Frost Hall, the school's second gym. The

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