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Vol. 27, No. 21

A Community Funded Newspaper Serving the Heart of Napa Valley

Nov. 7, 2024

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Knight, Reeves ahead in race for Town Council seats

By Kim Beltran
Sun Editor

Election night returns show that incumbents Eric Knight and Pam Reeves will more than likely retain their seats on the Yountville Town Council.

They were being challenged by Joe Tagliaboschi, former Public Works director, and Robert Moore, a retired veteran.

With just over 50% of the ballots returned, Knight, a 35-year resident of Yountville, was leading the four candidates with 456 votes.

Reeves was second with 394 votes, ahead of Tagliaboschi's 285 and Moore's 156.

Ballots were sent to 1,757 regis-

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KIM BELTRAN PHOTO

Kate Jessup of Napa places her election ballot in the drop box at Yountville's Vote Center Tuesday as greeter Luanne Breimon, seated, awaits the next arrivals. Napa County Registrar of Voters John Tuteur said that this election drew a record number of in-person voters in Napa County, which switched to mail-in balloting in 2018. Voters may still vote in person if they choose.

Trump wins presidency but Napa County voters stick to their Democratic roots, supporting Harris, others

By Mariela Gomez
Napa Valley News Group

Republican Donald Trump was the big winner in Tuesday's presidential election although Napa County voters overwhelmingly supported his rival, Vice President Kamala Harris, who received nearly 64% of the 26,160 ballots counted as of Wednesday morning.

Trump delivered a victory speech at 2:30 a.m. ET at the Palm Beach (Florida) County Convention Center after he won three crucial swing states – North Carolina, Georgia and Pennsylvania. The former pres-

ident, who defeated then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2016 and lost to then-Vice President Joe Biden in 2020, surpassed the 270 electoral votes needed for re-election at 5:34 a.m. ET Wednesday.

"Frankly, I believe, this was the greatest political movement of all time. There's never been anything like this in this country and maybe beyond," Trump told the crowd of supporters gathered in the Convention Center. "We're going to help our country heal. We have a country that needs help, and it

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Veterans treated to Chefs Luncheon for 20th year

By Elsa Cavazos
Highway 29 Media Co.

About 300 veterans sat down Wednesday to enjoy a three-course meal specially prepared for them by some of Yountville's most notable chefs.

It is a special day Yountville Veterans Home residents have been enjoying annually for 20 years. The tradition was started by Chef Bob Hurley and former Yountville Mayor Cindy Saucerman, who recently passed away.

Yountville resident Marita Dorenbecher has volunteered at the event since it began. She served on the Yountville Town Council for 12 years and used to host a party for the women veterans at her home.

Dorenbecher had never waited tables before, but when she volunteers at the luncheon, she is a server to the veterans. Her appreciation for veterans, she said, comes from a special place. Her husband John was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. They both volunteer together.

"Working with the veterans is a great priv-

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ELSA CAVAZOS/NAPA VALLEY NEWS GROUP

Chef Bob Hurley directs volunteers, including left to right, Nancy Caldwell, Andrea Holko and Charles Burke on Wednesday at the Yountville Veterans Home as they prepare to serve residents there for the annual Celebrity Chef Luncheon. This was the 20th year that local chefs have teamed up to produce the event.

Farmworker conference in town next week

By Mariela Gomez
Napa Valley News Group

Farmworkers don't just support the wine industry – they drive it.

Every bottle of wine produced in Napa Valley is influenced by their collective knowledge of vineyard practices, which demand ever evolving skills.

From Nov. 13 to 15, the farmworkers who care for the vines year-round will trade their pruning shears for pens and paper at the Napa Valley Farmworker Foundation's Cultivar conference.

The three-day, Spanish-speaking event, which will be held at the Yountville Community Center, is designed to impart leadership skills and expand the workers' viticultural knowledge.

The Cultivar conference — "cultivar" meaning "to cultivate" — will cover scientific advancements to help workers address climate challenges, including helping grapevines adapt to environmental changes. Sessions will range from comparative wine tastings linking vineyard practices to wine flavor, to discussions on how the next generation of Latino winemakers are adding cultural flair to Napa's wine scene. Attendees will also have an opportunity to visit the UC Davis campus and the university Foundation's Plant Services, a 100-acre vineyard

See **CULTIVAR** on page 6

Poetry Inn sold to Bay Area entrepreneur Padilla

By Vincent Vitale
For the Sun

The iconic Poetry Inn, which overlooks Yountville, was recently sold to PA Capital Management, a family firm that owns Sullivan Rutherford Estate and Loco Tequila.

The Inn, regarded as one of the most exclusive places to stay in Napa Valley, had been owned by the Cliff Lede family for just over 20 years.

"The property was an aging B&B when we purchased it in 2003 and began renovating under the vision of architect Howard Backen. My dad wanted to make guests feel like they were coming home, so everything about the

design was focused on privacy and touches like indoor/outdoor showers, wood-burning fireplaces, and, of course, great service," said Jason Lede, Cliff's son.

Cliff Lede, the proprietor and namesake of Cliff Lede Winery, originally named the hotel Poetry Inn, as it sat on a hill above their iconic Poetry Vineyard.

"To us, Poetry represents the highest level of beauty, which can be found in many things here in the valley. Our flagship wine bears the name Poetry for this reason," added Jason Lede.

Juan Pablo Torres Padilla (JP), CEO of PA Capital Management, said he saw a unique opportunity in purchasing the Poetry Inn.

Padilla, who had previously been CEO of an artificial intelligence company in France and has held other key positions in the telecommunications and financial investment world, is now managing partner of not only the Poetry Inn but the 26-acre Sullivan Rutherford Estate Winery and the Loco Tequila company.

Born and raised in Mexico, Padilla moved to France when he was 18. A trip that was supposed to last six months turned into an 18-year enriching experience. While he had a background in engineering and business and

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Town invites residents to dine and discuss Yountville Commons plan

The Town of Yountville is asking residents to participate in a series of upcoming community events to help shape the vision for the Yountville Commons project.

Yountville Commons is a proposed mixed-use development project on the 6.8-acre site of the former Yountville Elementary School. The Town purchased the property last year from the Napa Valley Unified School District for \$11 million and has been developing a plan based on public feedback from a series of open houses, study sessions and meetings with the architect guiding the process.

The next opportunity for community members to ask questions or offer input is this Tuesday at a Zoning and Design Review Board Yountville Commons Study Session at 5:30 p.m.

Following the study session, members of the public are welcome to a Community Roundtable on Thursday, Nov. 14, at 4 p.m. at Commons Hall, 6554 Yount St. This roundtable is part of the Town's "visioning" process and provides a space for residents to come together, share ideas, and discuss the future of this proposed new community space.

Looking ahead, don't miss 'Dinner and Conversations,' a series of Sunday gatherings where everyone can enjoy a meal, exchange ideas, and contribute to a shared vision for Yountville Commons. Dinner will be provided, and attendees are encouraged to bring their own plates, utensils, and beverages for a relaxed, collaborative experience.

Space is limited to 35 participants for the

Community Roundtable Dinner and Conversation series.

Dates and Details:

- Sunday, December 8, 2024 at 4 p.m.

Commons Hall
6554 Yount Street

- Sunday, January 12, 2025 at 4 p.m.

Community Hall
6516 Washington Street

- Sunday, February 16, 2025 at 4 p.m.

Community Hall
6516 Washington Street

Event Highlights

- Visioning Discussions: Participants will have opportunities to share ideas, concerns, and goals, ensuring the Yountville Commons project aligns with community interests and values.

- Facilitated Conversations: Project leaders and facilitators will guide discussions, allowing everyone's voice to be heard and documented for future planning.

Engagement Objectives

- Inclusive Visioning: Engaging residents from all backgrounds to build a Yountville Commons that reflects the community's collective vision.

- Transparency: Keeping residents informed and involved at every project stage.

- Collaborative Planning: Designing a space that meets both current and future needs of Yountville's diverse community.

To sign up for one of the "Dinner and Conversation" dates, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/town-of-yountville-68212336183>

RESULTS

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needs help very badly. We're gonna fix our borders; we're gonna fix everything about our country."

Trump, 78, survived two assassination attempts during this year's campaign and will become the oldest U.S. president in history.

Vice President Harris, who chose to wait to address her supporters until results were clear, was set to concede the election to Trump at 4 p.m. ET from her alma mater, Howard University in Washington.

In elections closer to home, Rep. Mike Thompson (D-St. Helena) retained his District 4 Congressional seat, securing his 14th term in the House with a win over Republican John Munn. With 48% of the ballots counted districtwide, Thompson led Munn with 65.9% of the vote – a big enough lead that The Associated Press called the race in the Congressman's favor late Tuesday night.

"To the voters of the Fourth District: Thank you. It is the greatest honor of my life to serve the people of the community where I was born, grew up, and raised my own family," Thompson said in a statement issued Tuesday night. "I am humbled and honored to have earned your trust to continue representing our community in

Congress."

Christopher Cabaldon, a Democrat from West Sacramento, will succeed Napa's term-ed-out Sen. Bill Dodd. Cabaldon was leading Republican Thom Bogue 61.5% to 38.5% for the District 3 state senate race. The district stretches from Rohnert Park across Sonoma Valley and Napa County all the way to the Sacramento River. Cabaldon was previously the mayor of West Sacramento from 1998-2020.

Incumbent Cecilia Aguilar-Curry (D-Winters), leading challenger Darren Ellis with almost 64% of the vote, is poised to retain her District 4 State Assembly seat for a fifth term. The district includes all of Yolo, Napa, Lake and Colusa counties, along with the city of Sonoma and communities of Boyes Hot Springs, El Verano and Eldridge.

In a hotly contested race between Democrat Adam Schiff and Republican Steve Garvey for a Congressional Senate seat, the former public prosecutor led the former Major League Baseball player 60% to 40%. Schiff will be filling the Senate seat that Dianne Feinstein held for 31 years, until her death at 90.

Key local ballot measures also attracted significant attention among Napa County

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INN

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and worked in various industries, including tech and AI, his true passion, he said, was wine.

He frequently visited, often weekly, top wine regions throughout France, including Burgundy, Champagne, and Bordeaux. He said he had an epiphany during one of his early visits in 2006.

"My uncle and I were hosted for a private visit to Domaine de la Romanée-Conti by its co-owner, Aubert de Villaine. The history, the art, the mystery, and the beauty of DRC made me reflect on my own life journey and triggered my desire to start a life project of purpose, connected to nature, tied to history, and with passionate people," said Padilla.

This fundamental experience led to him asking himself, "If I love wine so much, why can't I make my life out of this?"

Set on purchasing their own vineyard, Padilla and his family, including his uncle and business partner Pedro Padilla, initially explored vineyards in Burgundy and Bordeaux but soon turned to Napa Valley, drawn by its blend of old-world tradition and American innovation.

After two years and visits to over 120 wineries, Padilla defined his ideal vine-



The iconic Poetry Inn east of Yountville off Yountville Crossroad was recently sold by the Cliff Lede family to a Bay Area entrepreneur whose PA Capital Management company also owns Sullivan Rutherford Estate in Napa Valley as well as the Loco Tequila company. The purchase of the Howard Backen designed inn was not disclosed. Room rates listed online were between \$1,300 and \$1,500 a night.

BOB McCLENNAN PHOTO

yard criteria: A top-quality sense of place, historical significance, and potential for excellence. They found these qualities at Sullivan Rutherford Estate. Established in 1978 with Napa legend Andre Tchelistcheff, the 26-acre estate, with unique

gravelly soil, proved perfect for Cabernet Sauvignon.

After acquiring the estate in early 2018, Padilla knew the value in assembling a world-class team, including viticulturist Mike Wolf. In studying the terroir and

tasting past vintages, they found the estate property also produced exceptional Merlot with impressive density and structure. Despite Merlot's decline in popularity, they defied market trends and conven-

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Out and About in the Neighborhood



with Lorraine Visorsky

This past week and a half, I found it interesting to be a tourist in my own backyard, experiencing Yountville, Napa, and other parts of Northern CA through the eyes of visiting friends. Gincy and Steve Heins came first. We enjoyed the art walk, stopped for magazines at Honor Market, purchased a Yountville, CA canvas bag at Alchemy Works, and a Yountville sweatshirt at Ranch Market II, all before lunch at Lakeside Grill. They were thrilled with the town, including the pop-up, Le Labo. Then two dear friends, not enthusiastic wine-drinkers, Richard Gomez and Gerri Kania, taxed my ingenuity with visits everywhere from Muir Woods (make sure you have a reservation before you venture forth), Larkspur, Healdsburg, to San Francisco and Alcatraz. Locally, we enjoyed Madeleine's Macaron's savory crepes for late breakfast, and dinner at Il Posto.

Driving by one evening, I was very happy to see Ciccio and The Restaurant at North Block close to capacity. Both great places for frequent and memorable meals. And thank you to The Villagio, which reacted quickly on Thursday night by pouring from their own reserves when the slated winery canceled at the last minute.

Sharon Stensaas reported that longtime local Jenny Solis, mother of Bobby and Anita, of Pancha's, celebrated her 90th birthday the weekend of Oct. 19. Feliz cumpleaños!

And Yountville Sun editor Kim Beltran investigated a rumor that Arik Housley had closed Ranch Market in Napa. To allay concerns about our wonderful Ranch Market II, Arik commented that Ranch Market in Napa was sold last July to another local family interested in continuing the Ranch Market legacy of being community-serving. Jose and Veronica Gomez took over the Napa location in July of 2024. Housley told Kim that his family has no plans to sell the Yountville store at this time. Thank you, Arik, that certainly is great news for our community. We love our Ranch Market.

So, I have to ask, who has (or better yet, who hasn't) been to the new Napa Costco? My Welcome Center volunteer partner Ning Kemnitzer was there with her husband, Steve. Lots of free goodies, opening specials and aisles that went on forever, in all directions. That may or may not be enticing to some, but I most certainly enjoyed my stop there on Friday. And Saturday! So happy to have them closer now.

Need another reason to drink? Oct. 25 was Global Champagne Day, with celebrations at Auberge du Soleil, BeBubbly, and RO Restaurant and Lounge, among the places to imbibe this whole week. I was happy to oblige.

Susan Wiechers received a tidbit from our former Yountvillagers Kerri Dorman and Devon Avery, now living in their adopted town of Austin, Texas. They got to reminisce and catch up with Steve and Kim Cook, who were in town for the Formula 1 Pirelli US Grand Prix. Steve has been racing his vintage car in the Masters Historic Race at this event for the last several years. Starting the race in 8th place, Steve finished sixth out of 24. Even more important, he came home with a trophy for 1st in Class. Congratulations, Steve!

Suzanne and Mike Lescure drove to Palm Springs, CA and Scottsdale, AZ to attend two Ocular Melanoma conferences. Suzanne, a survivor, is a Board Member/Event Coordinator at A Cure in Sight Ocular Melanoma, patients helping patients.

Sadly, I forgot to mark my calendar and missed a great celebration, hosted by Joey Wolosz and Jeff Durham, the multi-talented owners of The Bungalow, aptly named "a studio for gustatory well-being." Napa's home to incredible food and their Gentleman Farmer Wines. Among the revelers, Ginger O'Conner, Nancy Caldwell and hubby Charles Burke, Rebecca Heutter, and Bob Gligorea. Special entertainment by Renée Lubin, star of San Francisco's

Beach Blanket Babylon, the world's longest-running musical revue, with Renée herself the longest-running performer in a musical review.

On a most beautiful evening, Materra Winery hosted The Yountville Chamber and over 100 associates for the last mixer of the 2024 season. Their array of Materra/Cunat Wines were a perfect end to a great year of celebrating. If you have never been there or tasted their most approachable wines, a visit to their magnificent, newly-opened tasting and event rooms, a cavernous masterpiece, is a must. Thank you Kevin Krueger, DTC Manager, and the whole Materra team. And special thanks to Whitney Diver McEvoy, Andrea Scarpa May, and newbie Jackie Roldan for all your efforts to make each mixer a great memory.

And no, I do not get anything for this public service announcement, except the satisfaction of helping to keep it running. The WineCountryAirporter.com provided my friends and me with flawless service to and from San Francisco Airport. Reasonable, on-time, attractive buses and professional drivers. They leave seven times a day, including four on-demand stops in Yountville. A real service to our Valley.

On a somber note, for those who would like to pay tribute to Carl Johnson, Yountville resident, Welcome Center volunteer, and Monday night bocce captain, a memorial will be held Sunday, Nov. 10, 2 to 5 p.m., at the Rancho de Napa Clubhouse.

Holidays in Yountville web-pages are now available through the YountvilleChamber.com website. An amazing array of six weeks of holiday celebrations in and around Yountville. Start planning!

One such event will be Hope's Chest at the Hotel Yountville on Dec. 8 from 3 to 6. Contact Iren Jenny at jennysrus@att.net for more info.

Items for this column? E-mail me at lafly1@aol.com
OK, Martini time...

INN

Continued from page 3

tional thinking and dedicated the winery to showcasing world-class Merlot.

The goal, however, wasn't simply to sell wine but rather "To provide a vehicle for people to share meaningful moments in life. The wine is simply a vehicle," Padilla said.

The same tenets of excellence, terroir, and family legacy used to assess and build Sullivan Rutherford Estate were also used to launch the company's premium tequila company, Loco Tequila. The top-shelf brand is found at various Napa Valley establishments, from downtown Napa favorites like Chispa Bar to restaurants and high-end resorts like Carneros Resort & Spa and Calistoga's Picobar at Solage, Auberge Resorts Collection and the Michelin-starred Auro at Four Seasons Resort.

Founded in 2012 by Pedro and JP Padilla and JP's longtime friend, Gabriel Roqueni, Loco Tequila was created to honor Mexico's rich heritage, using its iconic spirit to celebrate history, art, and tradition. The name "Loco" was inspired by the "crazy" visionaries who push the boundaries of excellence beyond what is considered normal, Padilla said.

Loco Tequila's production is housed at Hacienda La Providencia, a 200-year-old estate with a long history of high-quality tequila production located in the Valle del Arenal, Jalisco, Mexico. The tequila begins in the agave fields, where over 200 sustainably farmed acres are carefully cultivated. Using water from La Bosque de Primavera, a nature preserve with spring-fed rivers, Loco Tequila focuses on purity and terroir, guided by tequila expert Alberto Navarro, author of Larousse del Tequila. From field to bottle, every step is a tribute to artisanal craftsmanship.

With its reopening this spring, Loco Tequila will join a select group of just six additive-free, estate-owned distilleries in the Tequila region, offering a terroir-driven approach reminiscent of

Napa's prestigious wineries.

"I like to tell people to forget anything they have ever heard about Tequila before they try Loco Tequila. This is different than what the industry understands today," said Padilla.

This same commitment to excellence led Padilla and his team to the Poetry Inn.

"Poetry Inn, for many respects, was perfectly aligned with the ethos of JP (Padilla). It's a private place. A lot of people don't know what it is. It's not open to the public, only the guests that stay there. It's the most exclusive place people can stay in Napa Valley," said Poetry Inn general manager Steve Davino.

Since the purchase of Sullivan Rutherford Estate, Padilla and company were attracted to the idea of having the option to host guests overnight. Due to county regulatory issues, they couldn't build such a facility on the Sullivan property.

"We looked all over the valley for years and did not find a single place like Poetry Inn. The architecture and privacy are unlike those in a multi-floor hotel, where you just go and are one more person," said Padilla. "The ambassadors at the Inn provide an individual, custom experience for everyone."

After years of discussion, Padilla and the team acquired the property, allowing them to build on all three brands in harmony.

"This gives us a place where we can provide an environment and set of experiences to get to know our guests better. You can only get to know someone so well at a winery for a couple of hours. But two, three, four, five nights allow you to develop a better relationship, which is what all our businesses are about," said Padilla.

Eventually, the property will relaunch with a new name and identity that fits under the umbrella of PA Capital Management. Until then, Poetry Inn will continue with its exceptional standard of excellence, the team said.

"The vision we've discussed is taking it to the next level. Taking what's been done and expanding," said Davino.

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