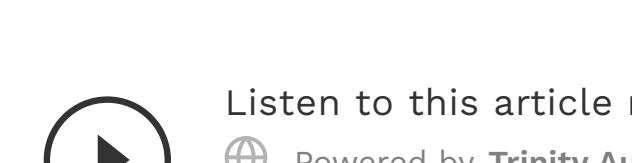


Cooperation with firefighter should be countywide model

George Caloyannidis Nov 1, 2020 Updated Aug 31, 2021



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Early in its inception, Volunteer Battalion Chief Jeff Lemelin assisted the homeowners' Diamond Mountain Firesafe Council with his advice. With members of the community, Jeff explored alternative escape routes, evaluated them based on accessibility and tree canopy conditions during panic evacuations and identified emergency escape locations. Well before the Hennessey and Glass Fires erupted, Jeff familiarized himself with the majority of properties on our mountain and got to know its people.

As a result, when the fire on our mountain erupted, he was already familiar with what is where, water sources, generators, defensible spaces around homes and was able to effectively advise fire crews and their use of equipment with his knowledge of local conditions.

If this were not enough, his access to the evacuated areas enabled him to communicate with many homeowners about the status of their properties. We all know how stress-relieving such information can be.

If an involved and courageous volunteer fireman could make such difference during the infernal conditions our mountain experienced – even as exceptional Jeff proved to be - his effective involvement should serve as a county-wide model in assigning similarly motivated firemen exclusively to each of our many fire prone hillside communities. Intimate prior local knowledge proved to be invaluable.

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Below you can read Jeff's touching letter to the community he got to know intimately and served with such dedication and courage. In spite of the heartfelt appreciation and gratitude expressed by all Diamond Mountain residents, it will never be enough.

VOTE JOHN DUNBAR, NAPA COUNTY SUPERVISOR

Together We Can:

- Focus on housing affordability in our communities
- Make fire prevention and preparedness a priority
- Protect our treasured natural environment
- Carefully consider traffic relief efforts on HWY 29 and Silverado Trail
- Prioritize water conservation and water quality programs

The model Jeff personified ought to be embraced and emulated.

George Caloyannidis

Calistoga

It has been a few weeks since the start of the Glass fire. My heart has been heavy as I reflect on the destruction that has plagued the Diamond Mountain community. I never thought that after working with your fire safe council that we would actually be facing this scenario so soon. Over the last couple weeks I have had the blessing to get to know some of you on a much more personal level. Everyone on Diamond Mountain has been affected by this fire either from experiencing a total loss of your home, being evacuated without power for many days, or having your beautiful trees and landscape ravaged by this inferno.

When I went to Diamond Mountain on Monday morning when Diamond Mountain was taking a direct hit, I found myself on the top of the South Fork with a running crown fire devouring the heavy timber. I knew at that minute that we were going to be experiencing a loss of structures and I was praying we would lose no lives.

The work this Fire Council has done and the preparation for this dreadful day saved lives. When I went back to Diamond Mountain on Tuesday morning, my goal was to assess as many homes as I could and try to prevent the loss of more structures.

During the first couple days of the fire we had limited resources.

VOTE JOHN DUNBAR, NAPA COUNTY SUPERVISOR

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I am thankful that you have invited me into your community as this gave me intimate knowledge to start getting dozers and engines to key locations to start working. I consider all of you friends and hope for a time in the near future when I can see everyone face to face.

Jeff Lemelin, Volunteer Battalion Chief

Sonoma County Fire District

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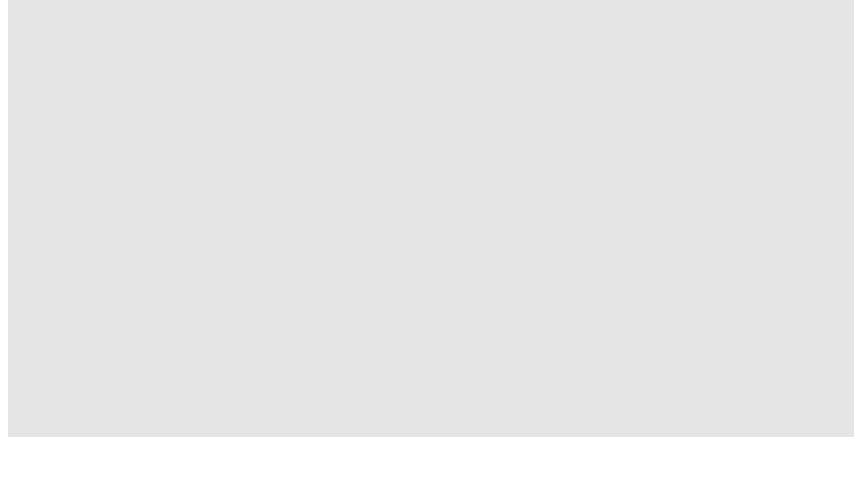
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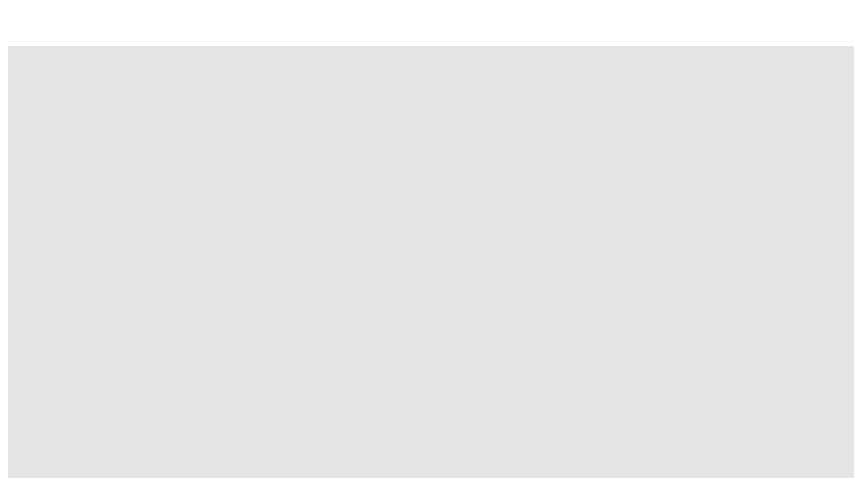
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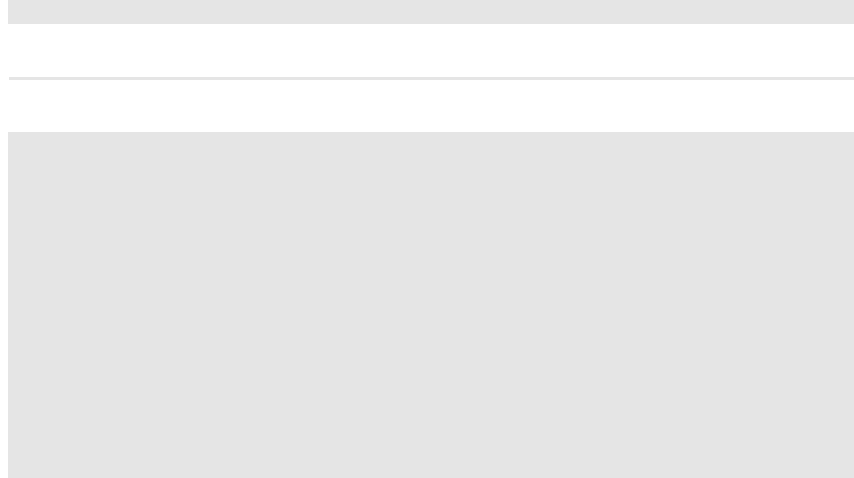


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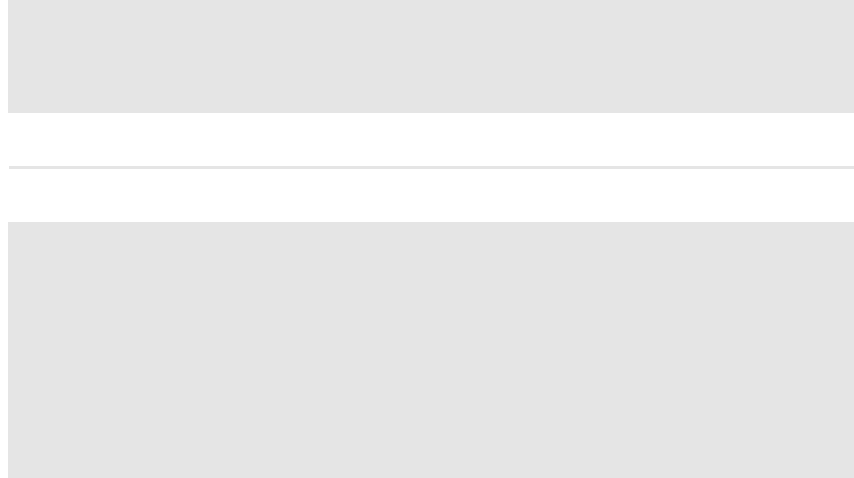
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Letters: Consider trade-offs for either approach.



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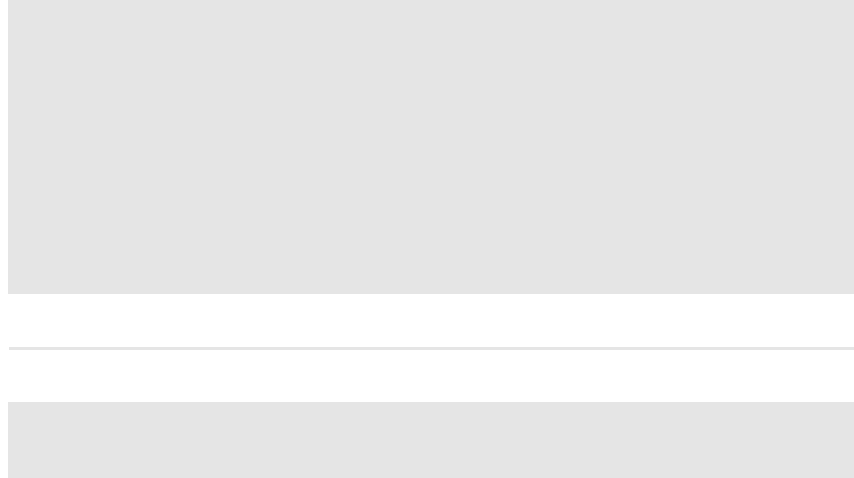
Immoral policies in our fire-prone zones

Letters: Permitting remote development increases the danger.



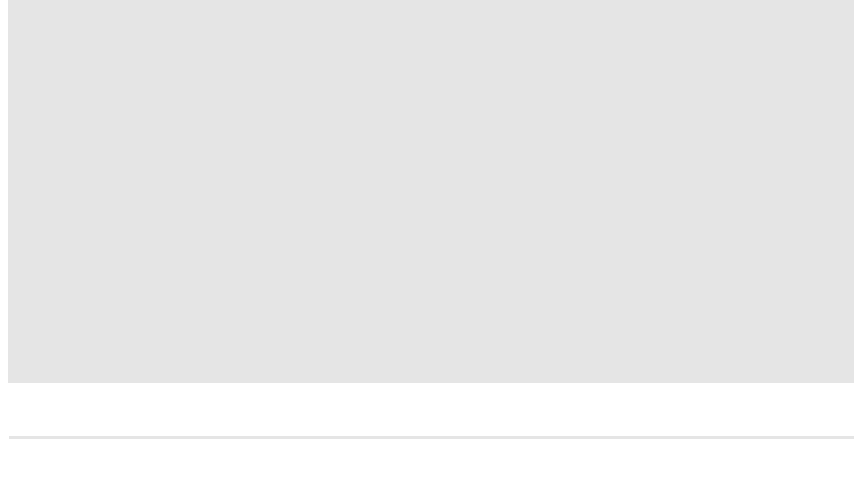
County must reassess its public hearings policy

Letters: County should suspend non-essential business to protect public's rights.



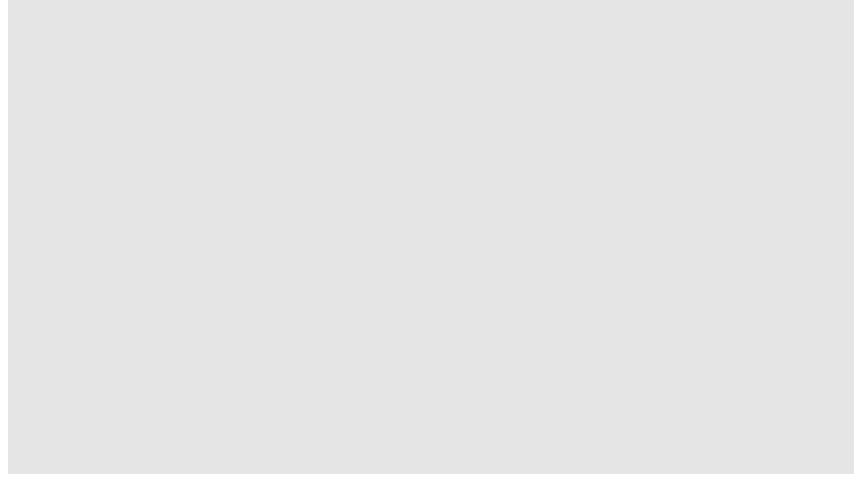
Is Napa County better prepared for emergency?

It is winter now and it is the right time to pose the question whether Napa County is better prepared for the summer fires than it was during ...



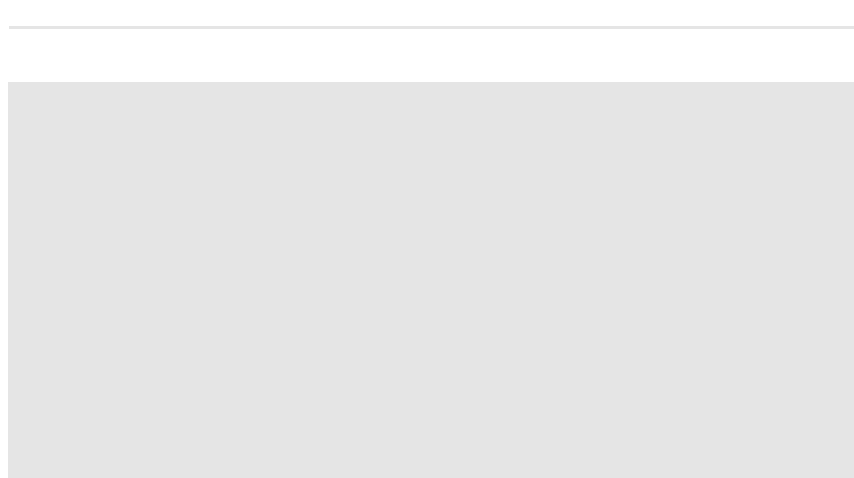
Looking beyond Street

I applaud the city council for having solicited wider public input to better define the guidelines for a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the de...



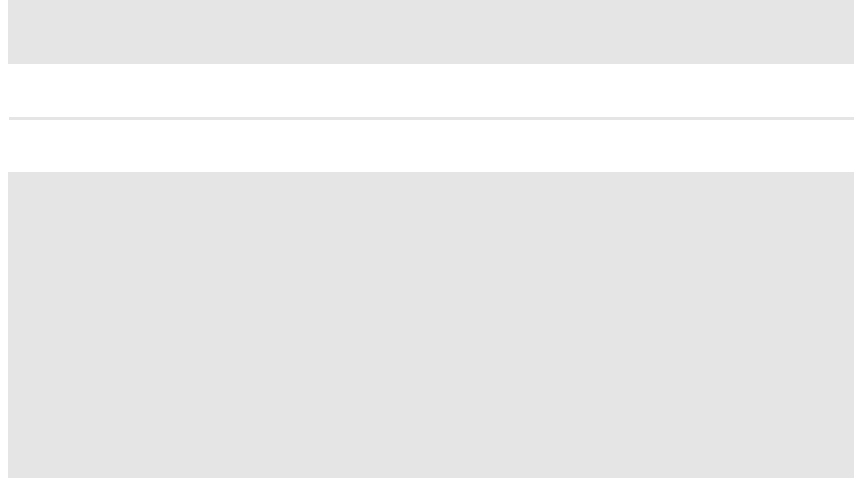
Thanks for so many years of mentorship

Letters: She has been my rock, and I will miss our work relationship greatly



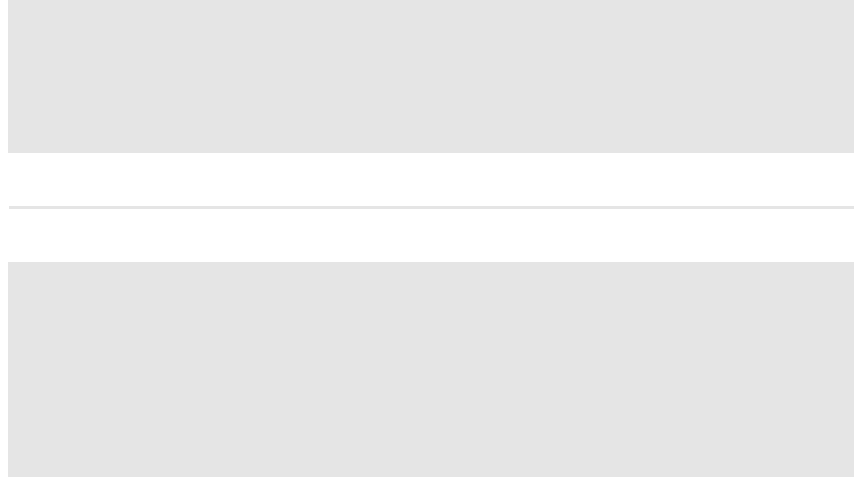
A chivalrous PG&E worker

Letters: Whoever you are, thank you.



We need a post-Glass Fire debrief

Letters: Regarding what went well and where we can improve, so we can be better prepared for the next one.



The Napa County supervisors' disconnect

Letters: The supervisors have boarded a train they don't know how to get off of.



D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson and Napa County growth

Letters: Human communities have limits, just like organisms.

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