

# City of Calistoga

## Memo

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Olivia Lemen, Aquatic and Recreation Manager  
**DATE:** April 7, 2009  
**SUBJECT:** Lifeguard Certifications

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In the summer of 2008, City staff began recruiting current part-time employees and local young adults who had strong swimming abilities to attend a lifeguard training program with the understanding that they would be the first candidates to be interviewed for the positions when the pool opened. Three local Calistoga residents and City employees received their certification in July of 2008. The second wave of recruitment took place and an additional 14 local teens were certified in February and March of this year.

Prior to attending their first class, candidates were required to complete an employment packet and submit all paperwork. They attended multiple informational meetings and were required to show their swimming skills and ability to pass pre-requisites. Upon review of those skills, staff identified the need to set up a weekly work-out/training time at the Calistoga Spa Hot Springs pool where they could work to improve their endurance and swimming strength.

City staff then transported two groups to Santa Rosa up to 4 days a week for 2 months to make sure that they were on time and attended every class lifeguard training class. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, the last group finished their training and received their lifeguard certification through the American Red Cross.

Last year, the Calistoga Community Pool Project (CCPP) applied for and received a grant through Auction Napa Valley (ANV) to sponsor the costs of these youth to attend the Lifeguard training. In August of 2008, the ANV granted funds to CCPP to provide Lifeguard Training as part of a larger water safety program to local Calistoga young adults. The requirements of the grant were to have a minimum of 10 staff with 30% being bilingual. We currently have nine bilingual Lifeguards, giving us a 50% ratio. This grant has allowed us to provide the Lifeguard training at no cost to the new Lifeguards. The remaining grant funds will provide a free or heavily subsidized water safety class for low-income Hispanic families once the pool opens with classes being offered in both English and Spanish. These newly trained bilingual staff will be an integral part of this program.

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This recruitment effort was an overwhelming success due to the hard work and commitment of Community Resources staff Frank DiFede, Julio Ambriz and Police Chief, Jonathan Mills.

Congratulations are due to the new Lifeguards, City staff and the Calistoga Community Pool Project Committee for all their efforts and hard work to make this program a huge success and appreciation for the generosity of Calistoga Spa Hot Springs for their substantial help and significantly reduced rate for use of their facility.