

# Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print

Willits Weekly

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS

SUNDAY, MARCH 10

Donations Accepted Edition No. 540 Thursday, March 7, 2024

## Talk on 'People living homeless' in Willits

Margi Gomez Guhde  
Features Writer  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

The pews were full at the Willits United Methodist Church to hear Helen Falandes, M.Ed., speak on "Safety & Compassion: People Living Homeless in the Willits Community" the first in 2024's Avenues to Wellness lecture series. Falandes is part of a grassroots effort to understand the reasons for homelessness in the Willits community, and to find ways to reduce the number of families and individuals who are living without stable or safe housing.

The February 24 presentation offered a common-sense program which addressed the core reasons for homelessness and offered guidance for achieving realistic solutions.

Falandes, who has been working, training and teaching in the counseling and human services fields for over 40 years, said that currently around 12 percent of the national homeless population lives in California, with the estimated number of the unsheltered in Willits thought to be at around 150 people.

Read the rest of **Homeless**  
Over on Page 11

## Ukiah man dies after 'mass incident' at jail

By Captain Gregory L. Van Patten for MCSO

On March 1, 2024, at approximately 12 pm, the Mendocino County Jail control board operator received an intercom call from a cell located in a module within the facility's main jail building.

The intercom call was initiated by an inmate housed in a two-person occupied cell who asked for a Corrections deputy to respond to the cell.

A Corrections deputy responded and noticed one male inmate in the cell was unconscious with discoloring in the face which suggested a life-threatening breathing problem. The floor deputy immediately summoned the assistance of other correctional staff to include on-duty facility medical personnel.

The deputy entered the cell and began to provide life-saving techniques for a potential choking situation as the housing unit had just concluded lunch in a group setting before returning to their assigned cells for housing purposes.

During this process

Read the rest of **Incident**  
Over on Page 11



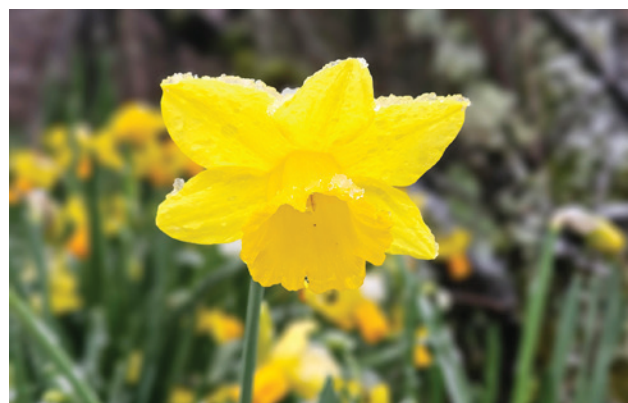
Photo by Sheri Cronin



Photo by Rolina Fuentes



Photos by Maureen Jennison



At top, left: A snowy fence line and snowy topped trees look beautiful in Rock Tree Valley. At top, right: A snowy Locust Street Saturday morning. Above: Snowdrops are capped with a dusting of actual snow during the weekend storm. At left: Different varieties of daffodils were glowing golden and bright in the winter sun, before the snow fell.



At left: Roxie, 12, still felt spritely enough to rumpus about in the falling snow Saturday morning, her thick coat keeping her warm while she barked at the falling snowflakes.



Photo by Nicole Basler

Below, left: With a snowman taller than both, Colter, 5, and his dog, Trax, enjoyed playing in the 2.5-plus feet of snow at their home out Spyrock, 5 miles north of Laytonville. Below: Flakes of snow settled on daffodil petals.



## Council accepts East Commercial plan

By BB Kamoroff

"It's a vision," City Manager Brian Bender explained to the city council, summarizing the final draft of the East Commercial Street Corridor Plan. "It is basically a library of concepts and ideas. It's a wish list, it's a menu."

What it started out as, was a proposal, during the drought when water trucks were constantly filling up at the city-owned well next to the rodeo grounds – raising dust and raising concerns about the safety of people coming and going to the ballparks across the street – to use the fees collected from the water sales to improve that one area of East Commercial Street.

Somewhere along the way, that project mushroomed into a 150-page grand plan for the entire length of East Commercial, encompassing not only street safety projects but all sorts of decorative and cosmetic changes, if and when funds are obtained. None of the many projects that make up the plan, including the original ballpark-area safety upgrade, currently has funding. (The redesign of

Read the rest of **Plan**  
Over on Page 11

## Initial election results from March 5 primary

Jennifer Poole  
Editor & Reporter  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Mendocino County's Third District – Willits, Laytonville and Covelo – had a very quiet Presidential primary this year, with no local races on the ballot.

The votes of 7,418 county citizens have been counted already, according to the "Final Election Night Report" posted on the county's Elections site. There are many ballots left to count – mostly mail-in ballots dropped off at polling stations on Election Day – not to mention the mailed ballots still being accepted under California's postmark plus 7 days policy.

It's usually about half of the ballots that still remain to be counted and reported after the "Final Election Night Report." But comparing the number of ballots reported in this year's initial results in the "Final Election Night Report" from 2020, indicates that turnout is down this year. In 2020, 12,815 ballots were reported in initial results, and this year's first report

Read the rest of **Election**  
Over on Page 11

# What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

## Negative ads in 2nd District Assembly race

To the Editor:

There was an inordinate amount of advertising – some very negative - in the race for Second Assembly District. By the time this letter is read, the election will be over, and the top two candidates will go to a runoff in November.

But we want to register that 1. it disturbs us how much money (and resources) have been spent on these multiple glossy mailers; and 2. in particular we are appalled by the mean-spirited, often overblown negative “hit pieces.”

It is low to try to knock out your opponents instead of running on your own merits. We will usually choose to NOT vote for those engaging in this type of campaigning.

Madge Strong, Mary Zellachild, and Kimbal Dodge, Willits

## NEXT WEEK:

Make sure to grab your copy of the Soroptimist International of Willits'

## 2024 Willits Community Telephone Directory

Distributed in the March 14 edition of Willits Weekly!

## Lightning fire consumes Leggett Post Office, March 1

Posted by Leggett Valley Fire Department

On Friday, March 1 at approximately 5:40 pm, lightning struck a large redwood tree that stood just outside the Leggett Post Office, on Drive Thru Tree Road [about 45 miles northeast of Willits].

The tree was shattered and fell through the building.

The building was quickly consumed by flames despite the deluge of rain and hail. Leggett Fire was dispatched to a commercial fire at 5:46 pm. Multiple agencies responded with resources to contain the blaze.

The post office building was a total loss with multiple exposures, including the local market, saved. Leggett Valley Fire would like to thank Piercy Fire, Laytonville Fire, CAL FIRE, and Caltrans for their assistance.

*Editor's Note: The U.S. Post Office announced Saturday that as of March 4, Leggett customers should pick up their mail at the Garberville Post Office, 368 Sprowl Creek Road, Monday through Friday, 9 am to 4:30 pm, and Saturday 10 am to 2 pm. "Customers are asked to please present photo ID for mail pick-up."*

To see videos of the Leggett Post Office fire, visit <https://mendofever.com/2024/03/01/leggett-post-office-reportedly-on-fire-following-lightning-strike/>

## The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com). Willits Weekly prints letters and commentaries about Willits and Third District issues, activities, events, and people. We print letters to the editor from residents of Willits and the Third District only. To encourage a variety of voices, Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once every four weeks.

Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

## Willits Weekly

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P.O. Box 1698 Willits, CA 95490 / 707-459-2633; 707-972-7047  
[willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com) / [www.willitsweekly.com](http://www.willitsweekly.com)

Jennifer Poole, publisher and editor / [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com) / 707-459-2633

Maureen (Moore) Jennison, art director and photographer / [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com) / 707-972-7047

Jackie Cobbs, features editor

Mathew Caine, photographer / features writer

Barbara O'Reardon, Brooktrails reporter

Annie Everts, reporter / features writer

Danya Davis, Police Log

Margi Gomez Guhde, features writer / reporter

Sheri Dockins, sports reporter

Ava Dockins, sports photographer

April Tweedell, ad sales / 707-972-2475 / [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com)

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## THIRD DISTRICT SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

### March 2024

By Supervisor John Haschak

March has arrived with a fury. There's news of the Leggett Post Office burning down after a lightning strike, drug overdoses in the jail resulting in one death, and the snowstorm reminding us of what needs to be better prepared. The Office of Emergency Services has been preparing and communicating with emergency responders throughout the Mendocino County. The lack of a post office in Leggett reminds us of the central role these community centers play in our lives.

I am sending good healing thoughts to Jim Shields of Laytonville and Bruce Anderson of Boonville. Both are intrepid newspaper people and community-minded citizens. May they get back to doing what they do best which is informing the community of the good and bad, keeping us all on our toes.

The election was bumpy with the ballot misprints and problems with redistricting. People are asking how did this happen. To assure voters that these incidents will not happen again, the board and Katrina Bartolomei, Clerk Recorder in charge of elections, must work together, find out where things went wrong, and make sure those problems are fixed.

The board decided to move the Veterans Services Office back to the Observatory Avenue location. Kudos to the persistence of the veterans who returned time and again to the board chambers to voice their disapproval of this move. I worked with staff and veterans to make the move as good as possible, but the base issues were unresolved. I appreciate that the veterans said that they would help with the move back to Observatory. When the time comes to move, we will be calling on them and they will show up.

The CEO rolled out her plan to balance the budget. The board, with a few changes, adopted the plan. It will raise revenue, cut costs, and create efficiencies. Overall, about \$10 million needs to be raised or cut. I see county staff working to do more with less across the many departments.

There will be a Talk with the Supervisor Thursday, March 14 at 10 am at Brickhouse Coffee in Willits. I am available by email [haschakj@mendocinocounty.gov](mailto:haschakj@mendocinocounty.gov) or phone 707-972-4214.

## Help the Humane Society at the Pub

Submitted by Shanachie Pub

This Sunday, March 10 at Shanachie Pub, we are hosting a fundraising event for the Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County! From 1 to 5 pm, we will have representatives from the Humane Society and hopefully some of their furry friends too! There will be a silent auction filled with goodies from our local businesses, such as J.D. Redhouse, Re-Evolution, Moon Lady, Coast Hardware, and many more!

We will also have live music from 6 to 9 pm with Gustavo, Tyler B, Tommy G, and Shawn!

Please come out to support those who support our furry friends!

## Avenues to Wellness presents: 'Seeds of Wellness' by Diane Smalley

Submitted by Avenues to Wellness

Is the body a complete mystery to you? Let's explore the 10 most basic elements that will help you stay well throughout the seasons of your life. This talk is an opportunity to improve your health no matter where you are. Please join us as we discover the seeds of wellness.

Licensed acupuncturist Diane Smalley of Abundant Health Acupuncture and Herbs has been practicing Asian medicine for 39 years. She finds that the more you know about your health, the better equipped you are to keep yourself and your family well. Smalley's greatest joy is seeing the light of self-knowledge glow in your eyes!

Smalley will be sharing her knowledge in a talk titled "Seeds of Wellness" on Wednesday, March 20 at Willits Methodist Church, located at 286 School Street. This event is free to the public. Donations are appreciated.

Avenues to Wellness is a program of the Frank R. Howard Foundation. They offer a speaker series the third Wednesday of the month at Willits Methodist Church (wheelchair accessible). Visit: [www.avenuestowellness.org](http://www.avenuestowellness.org) for an archive of past events. Call 456-9676 for more information. Email: [spicetti@howardfoundation.org](mailto:spicetti@howardfoundation.org).

## 2023 Report from

### Willits Chamber of Commerce

*Editor's Note: This report was included in the agenda packet for the February 29, 2024 Willits City Council meeting, as part of a presentation from Willits Chamber of Commerce board members and Coordinator Susan Mahoney.*

The Willits Chamber of Commerce is a VOLUNTEER organization with the support of a part-time employee.

2023 was a year of renewal for the Chamber with new (used) computers, reconstructed membership lists, review/renegotiation of existing contracts, website editing, and reconnection of relationships.

During 2023, the Chamber held eight mixers including three ribbon cutting celebrations. Mixers were held for Rotary Club, Lions Club, North County Center (College), Mendocino County Museum Stone Stories, Mane House, Flourish & Flow and The Munchery.

The Chamber also participated in events to benefit tourism including the new CA visitor center in Ukiah, Thatcher Hotel in Hopland, and a Forest Service presentation at Lake Mendocino. We also participated in events sponsored by VisitMendocino to develop strategies to promote tourism.

The Chamber supports the community by sponsoring the Calendar page of Willits Weekly, making it possible for activities large and small to be promoted. We participated in various civic committees, including the Land Use committee planning for the updated 20 year plan, a shoplifting/retail theft forum, the 95th birthday celebration at Howard Hospital, and the Blue Zones celebration of Roots restaurant.

We provided support for the City of Willits' various open house events, for the public outreach on the 20-year plan and the East Commercial Street project. There was also Chamber representation on various Economic Summit round table county-wide events with local and national government representatives (Jared Huffman) and local economic development entities such as EDFC and West Business Development Center.

Chamber staff dedicated many hours during 2023 to develop the digital signage program that is very close to launching – helping tourism in Willits.

The Chamber is a very active partner with other non-profit organizations by sponsoring the Lion's Club Blues & Brews, Rotary's Claws for a Cause, Willits Soroptimists, Willits Community Theatre, Willits Center for the Arts, Frontier Days, and other groups such as the Willits High School yearbook and WCA Art Walk.

Chamber events included a Financial Strategies Workshop, the Annual Car & Bike Show (set to happen Sunday, May 26 on Main Street this year), and Harvest Moon Celebration.

### 2023 IN REVIEW

- Volunteers donated over 1,800 hours (not including the board of directors)
- Over 500 phone and visitor inquiries answered by office staff
- 8 mixers sponsored including 3 ribbon-cuttings
- 3 major events promoting tourism
- Sponsorship and promotion of more than 6 major non-profit community events
- Increased membership by 18%

For more information about the Willits Chamber of Commerce, visit <https://willits.org/> The Willits Chamber of Commerce, 299 East Commercial Street, is currently open from 10 am to 4 pm, Monday through Thursday. Contact the Chamber at 707-459-7910 or email [info@willits.org](mailto:info@willits.org).

## Senior Center menu for the week

Willits Senior Center is serving lunch in its indoor dining room, and continues to serve drive-through and walk-up lunches, too. Lunch is available Monday through Friday, from 12 to 12:45 pm, inside and outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Lunches are \$8; \$75 for a 10 lunch card for Senior Center members.

Thursday, March 7: Carnitas Burrito Wet w/Green Sauce

Friday, March 8: Chicken & Dumplings

Monday, March 11: Teriyaki Chicken Stir-Fry

Tuesday, March 12: Salisbury Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Mushroom Gravy, Veggies, Roll

Wednesday, March 13: Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread

Thursday, March 14: Grilled Chicken, Green Salad, Garlic Bread

Friday, March 15: Corned Beef & Cabbage

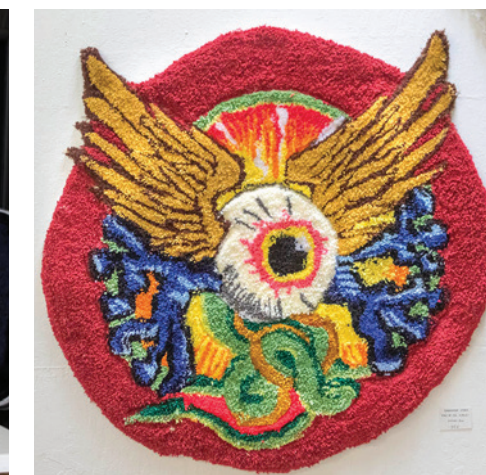
Activities: Bingo every Friday night, 5 to 7 pm. Exercise class every weekday morning from 9 to 10 am.

**Pancake Breakfast:** every second Sunday, on March 10 this month, 8 to 11 am. \$10; \$9 center members; \$6 children under 8. Menu choices: 1. Pancakes with eggs cooked the way you like them, and choice of sausage or bacon. 2. Biscuits & gravy with eggs cooked the way you like them. \$10; \$9 Senior Center members; \$6 children under 8. Extra meat sides \$2: 3 slices bacon, 2 sausage links. Breakfast includes Peet's Coffee and orange juice or milk.

**Meals on Wheels:** The Senior Center Meals on Wheels program delivers lunch Monday through Friday. To sign up call Joliana at 459-6826, who can help fill out the application form. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery. Delivered throughout Willits.

**Transportation for seniors:** Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments. Senior Center Thrift Shop: 459-2176

The Senior Center is in need of volunteers to help with the many activities here at the center, including volunteer Meals on Wheels drivers. "Volunteers are one-third of our workforce, which allows us to offer many services to our members and community." To learn more about volunteering: 459-6826.



Above, from left: BACE co-owner David Blesse is trying to get certification for the venue to become a private club. Robert Moen shows a sampling of his approximately 174 guitars and some of his mosaic guitars. Co-owner Graham Considine created several of these pieces of wall art for the studio. At right: Hal Wagenet brought a selection of his acoustic and electric guitars. At far right: BACE co-owner Graham Considine works on creating smash burgers for the attendees. Below: Local musicians filter in to peruse the instruments and electronic equipment.



Below, left: Mitchell Holman shows off this custom electric bass that he brought to sell. Below, right: One of Robert Moen's mosaic guitar art pieces is on display. At bottom, left: Base player Tom Girdauskas is ready to sample his smash burger. At bottom, right: Electronic music requires a plethora of various devices like those seen here.

Photos by Mathew Caine

# A Different Tune

## BACE, a Willits art gallery and music venue hoping to become a private social club, holds instrument swap

BACE is one of Willits' best under-the-radar venues, with live music, techno and art. Since owners David Blesse and Graham Considine took over the space from Leopold Collective, they have attempted to create a place where primarily aficionados of electronic dance music and all the trappings of that genre can congregate to enjoy this type of music that cannot be heard anywhere but at their location at 109 North Main Street.

They create a unique experience of sound and light as well as present local artists with a place to exhibit their work and provide a venue for live music. They have held events with yoga and other aesthetic pursuits. Their list of live performers includes Outlaw Space and Ketracell (with local musicians Kyle Madrigal, Lincoln Andrews, and Mario Vela), David Starfire, Carla Starla, and many more.

"Our vision is bringing in elements of a festival setting into a one-night space and using mixed-media presentations. The focus is on music and art, mixed-media art, interactive art, and generative art, which is algorithmic and procedural. It's art that is continuously changing, making art that drives itself though creative coding," explained Blesse.

However, it is difficult in a small town to sustain a venue without the benefit of grants that help pay the bills and keep the doors open. In order to try and maintain their concept, Blesse and Considine are trying a bold and creative approach. They are recreating BACE as a private club with monthly dues.

"We are still in the process of getting our social club standing with the government, be fully certified," explained Considine as he was producing smash burgers on the back patio. "And that is way easier said than done, as we are finding out. We're on the precipice of that last little piece. If this were a game of Tetris, it would be that last little skinny piece that breaks apart all of the bureaucracy and stuff we've had to overcome."

Considine hopes to continue

Read the rest of **BACE** Over on page 9



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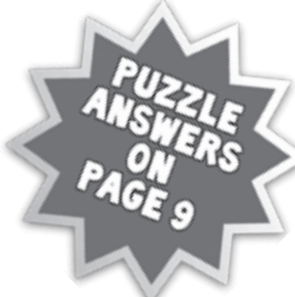
Walk-ins Welcome 707-459-2677 for an appointment

# Willits Weekly's Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

7	3	5				1		8
			5	6	3	7		
					8		3	
5		4			1	6		7
8	2		7				1	
				8		2		4
9	4	8	2				7	3
		2				9		
6	5				4	8		

Level: Beginner



## HOW TO SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

## WINTER'S CHILL WORD SEARCH

H C C O P Z G R I K U E W B L A N K Y E T  
W O G I T O T E Z E R O S T O O B R Y E  
G L A O T D L L P U H Z P Y B G B G P E C P O  
B D S B D C H A P U Z C W R A R A T S O  
O N L E R M R E R A M P R F L I S G N N W  
T E E L S E R A J A C K E T P S S I O R  
S S B E B Y B B L U S T E R Y D K W W Z  
Z W N R R T T M S J H U G R E B E C I D  
P W E E G O R E R V C M R S T N E T  
K R S A T T R I T C A W I D S Z L P S S  
A P N H T T T F L E E C E T H E R T A  
R T E M I E I V W V D P J S D N R E C R  
O M L B I K R M B E I E R P U O N C K R  
N K C T Y U S D H E A T E R G Z A K J E  
A P I E V A I T I N S A D E D B L T G V  
O V C D J G E W V F D E L S K N F T L O  
R U I V I L C H M F I R E P L A C E L B  
U H F R O S T B I T E S O C O A T J I P  
H A F S E V O L G F R D R E A R Y K H G  
L O A U L E V O H S S Z C K S N Y C I

- |          |           |          |         |
|----------|-----------|----------|---------|
| ANORAK   | COLD      | GALE     | POLAR   |
| ARCTIC   | DECEMBER  | GLOVES   | SHOVEL  |
| BITTER   | DREARY    | GUSTS    | SKI     |
| BLANKET  | EVERGREEN | HEATER   | SLED    |
| BLUSTERY | FIREPLACE | ICEBERG  | SLEET   |
| BOOTS    | FLANNEL   | ICICLE   | SNOW    |
| BRISK    | FLEECE    | JACKET   | SWEATER |
| CHILL    | FRIGID    | MITTENS  | WINTER  |
| COAT     | FROSTBITE | OVERCAST | ZERO    |

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8			
9					10				11		12	
13						14			15			
16				17					18			
19			20		21						22	
	23			24		25					26	
		27			28		29				30	
			31			32		33				
				34			35		36		37	
	38				39			40		41		42
43					44			45		46		47
48			49	50					51			52
53								54			55	
56									57			
	58									59		

### CLUES ACROSS

- Chaps
- Currently fashionable
- Collision
- More slim
- European city
- Implicitly
- The side of something that is sheltered from the wind
- The Mount Rushmore State
- Gold or silver wire cord
- Muscles along insects' diaphragm
- Trent Reznor's band
- Sweet juicy gritty-textured fruit
- Broken branch
- Indicates ten
- Expression of annoyance
- Brings together
- Ancient city in Thrace
- Sailors' spirit
- Looked into
- Muckraking woman journalist Rheta

- A type of cast
- One's responsibility
- Where golfers begin
- Make a mistake
- Semitic Sun god
- Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- Beheaded
- A place to stay
- Unwise
- Most supernatural
- 'Dennis' is a famous one
- Ointments
- Exam
- Leaked blood

### CLUES DOWN

- Baseball managers assemble it
- Revised
- Mountain is a popular kind
- Takes to civil court
- Pouches
- A type of veil
- Chants
- Boston hoopster
- Elongated appendage
- Sailboat
- 2017 Oscar-winning film
- Actor Gosling
- Monetary units
- Assembly
- Russian pop duo
- Embellished with expressions
- Inrequent
- Temperature unit
- Hydrophilic amino acid
- Honk
- Legislative body
- Swinish
- Russian assembly
- Take over for
- Put in advance
- Satisfy
- Felt
- Dutch cheese
- Witnesses
- Strong insects
- Gasteyer and de Armas are two
- Ancient people of Scotland
- Cheerless
- Sick

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT

# POLICE LOG

January 29 to February 11

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **113 incidents** in this 14-day reporting period.

### Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

#### January 29

6:52 pm: Officers initiated a hit-and-run vehicle collision investigation in the 100 block of Holly Street.

#### January 30

1:27 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 1700 block of Elm Lane.

4:19 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 400 block of Della Avenue and issued a citation.

10:48 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1600 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

11:03 pm: MENDEZ, Michael Charles (31) of Ukiah was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 148.9 PC (Providing False Identification to an Officer), on felony charges of violation of probation, and on misdemeanor charges of domestic corporal injury and drinking or possessing alcoholic beverages in public places.

#### January 31

6:27 pm: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 100 block of East Commercial Street and issued a warning.

6:51 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 400 block of Mill Street.

8:46 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

8:52 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

#### February 1

6:55 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a citation.

1:06 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

3:31 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 400 block of East Commercial Street.

4:16 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:31 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of Coast Street and West Highway 20 and issued a warning.

#### February 2

12:22 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 800 block of South Main Street.

2:48 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of East Commercial Street and issued a citation.

#### February 3

3:49 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

9:31 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 100 block of Gregory Lane.

#### February 4

6:02 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Marcela Drive.

#### February 5

10:28 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of Marcela Drive.

#### February 6

11:26 am: ALLEN, Steven Ray (66), was contacted in the 1500 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of trespassing and failure to appear.

8:24 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

9:55 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 500 block of West Highway 20 and issued a citation.

12:05 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Marcela Drive.

4:15 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 300 block of East Hill Road.

10:08 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Franklin Avenue.

#### February 8

10:32 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of Madrone Street and issued a warning.

10:50 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 1400 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

12:01 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of Madrone Street and issued a citation.

4:29 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:42 pm: BARNES, Michael Alan (53) of Willits was contacted near the intersection of West Highway 20 and Coast Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of petty theft, violation of probation, and failure to appear.

#### February 9

6:14 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of Baechtel Road and issued a warning.

8:40 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a citation.

11:29 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 1400 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

11:39 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

2:47 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:00 pm: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 100 block of West Valley Street and issued a warning.

4:22 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of East Oak Street and South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:30 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 400 block of Mill Street and issued a warning.

6:48 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle near the intersection of Meadowbrook Drive and Crest Drive.

7:02 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of South Main Street and Muir Mill Road and issued a warning.

#### February 10

11:28 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

1:23 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a citation.

1:41 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

2:06 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1400 block of South Main Street and issued a citation.

2:11 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1600 block of South Main Street and issued a citation.

3:46 pm: GUTIERREZ, Jose Ignacio (30) of Nuevo was contacted near the intersection of South Main Street and East Oak Street following a disturbance. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol and drugs).

8:56 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance near the intersection of Coast Street and Pine Street.

10:11 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of Alder Court and issued a warning.

10:50 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of Alameda Avenue and issued a citation.

#### February 11

4:32 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

OBITUARY |

## Edie Ceccarelli

Edith Rose "Edie" Ceccarelli of Willits died in her sleep on February 22, less than three weeks after the grand manner in which her hometown celebrated her historic 116th birthday made news around the world.

The New York Times, the Guardian and ABC World News shared accounts of the wind-swept and rain-pelted but undaunted parade that Edie watched from the garage of the Holy Spirit Residential Care Home on Grove Street.

For more than a year, Edie was the oldest validated person in America. She was also the longest-living Californian in the history of the state, and the second-oldest person on Earth.

She was born February 5, 1908, as Edith Recagno, the eldest of seven children of Italian immigrants Agostino and Maria Recagno. She began life in a house constructed by her father, who also helped to build the local stretch of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad and ran a Willits grocery store.

Edie graduated with the Willits Union High School Class of 1927. In 1933 she married high school sweetheart Elmer "Brick" Keenan and then moved with him to Santa Rosa, where he went to work as a typesetter with the Press Democrat.

The Keenans lived in Santa Rosa for 36 years. When Brick retired from the PD in 1971, he and Edie returned to Willits.

Brick Keenan died in 1984. His widow later married Charles Ceccarelli. They lived happily for just a few years before Charles died in 1990.

For decades, Edie was beloved in Willits as the kind and gracious woman who was happiest dancing or taking long walks through town.

Recitation of the Rosary will be at 5:30 pm March 15 at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at the church at 2 pm March 16. A reception will follow at the Willits Senior Center.

Edie's family suggests memorial donations to the Willits Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, Willits CA 95490 or willitscenter.com; to the Willits Kids Club, P.O. Box 1845, Willits CA 95490 or willitskidsclub.org; or to the Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center, P.O. Box 405, Redwood Valley CA 95470 or seabiscuitheritage.org/support-us.



Sheba.



Samantha.



Donald.

### Must-see Sheba

Meet Sheba, a transfer in from Mendocino County Animal Care Services. This girl is sure to catch your eye and win your heart. Sheba has been friendly with other dogs and sweet when meeting new people. She has the coolest ears and we think she is a must see! Sheba is available to meet anytime during open hours.

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino is located at 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley. Feel free to visit us, no appointments needed! We are open Wednesday through Friday, 1 to 5 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 3 pm; closed Monday and Tuesday. Check out all of our available dogs and cats on our website: www.mendocinohumanesociety.com, on our Facebook page, and on www.petfinder.com.

### Attentive Samantha

Samantha, or Sam, is a delightful small-sized shepherd mix and would make an attentive companion. Sam is affectionate and sweet. She has an overall happy demeanor and just wants love and attention. She prefers dog friends that are smaller than her.

While Samantha wants love and attention, as stated above, she would thrive in a structured, calm home with adults or older, dog-savvy teenagers.

To learn more about Samantha, or to view other adoptable animals, visit www.milofoundation.org or the Milo Foundation Sanctuary Facebook page. The sanctuary is currently doing pet adoptions by appointment only. Please complete a pet-adoption application before requesting an appointment. You can reach the Milo Foundation at 459-4900.

### Adventurous Donald

Donald is quite the young adventurer as he loves to explore his surroundings, and boy does he love to chase some toys. He's more of an independent cat, but gets along well with other cats and we think he would do well in a home with children.

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, is open to the public from noon to 5 pm Tuesday through Friday and 10 am to 3 pm (closed for lunch from 1 to 1:30 pm) on Saturdays. Make sure to pre-fill out the adoption application available at www.mendocinoshelter.com. Call 707-467-6453 for more information.

### Congrats | Happy Birthday

River,  
Best time for haiku,  
Is someone's special birthday,  
Someone just like you.  
Your magic just gets bigger and better with every passing year. Happy happy birthday. Love, Mom, Dad, Alaska, Lilo, Mittens, Stinky & Tobi

Willits Weekly runs free Congrats items for local birthdays, anniversaries, engagements, births and the alike for residents of Willits, Brooktrails, Laytonville, and Covelo. If you'd like to send someone some well wishes, email us a photo and caption to willitsweekly@gmail.com



## THE BUNNY IS BACK!

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Top row, from left: WPD Community Services Officer Chris Dendy, right, is officially sworn in by Willits City Manager Brian Bender on February 22. WPD Officer Cody Pearson receives the department's Lifesaving Award from interim WPD Chief James Conner. Acting Sergeant Rodrigo Avalos shakes interim Chief James Conner's hand after receiving the WPD's Lifesaving Award.

Bottom row, from left: Dispatcher Michael Stainbrook receives the WPD's Lifesaving Award from interim WPD Chief James Conner. WPD Officer Jamie Cary receives the department's Lifesaving Award from interim WPD Chief James Conner. WPD Officer John Gale receives the department's Lifesaving Award.

At left: Interim WPD Chief James Conner, at right, with new Community Services Officer Chris Dendy, center, and Lifesaving Awards winners, from left, Acting Sergeant Rodrigo Avalos, Officer John Gale, Dispatcher Michael Stainbrook, Officer Cody Pearson, and Officer Jamie Cary.

Photos courtesy of WPD, City of Willits

# 'Above and Beyond'

WPD honors 5 with Lifesaving Awards, swears in new CSO

Posted by WPD and City of Willits

On Friday, February 23 in the Willits City Council chambers, interim Willits Police Chief James Conner and City Manager Brian Bender gathered with employees and their families to complete the swearing-in ceremony for Community Services Officer Chris Dendy. CSO Dendy began in January and will continue his training support of sworn personnel and the department's mission of partnering with the community.

In addition, Interim Chief Conner awarded five Lifesaving

Awards in recognition of three recent lifesaving events. Acting Sergeant Rodrigo Avalos, Officer Cody Pearson, Officer John Gale, Officer Jamie Cary, and Dispatcher Michael Stainbrook each received the Willits Police Department's Lifesaving Award for their acts above and beyond in service to their community. We are proud to be able to recognize them for their dedication and service to Willits!

The Lifesaving Awards came from three local incidents. The most recent was on February 12, 2024 when officers conducting parking enforcement in the area of Creekside Drive and Creekside Court noticed a vehicle with expired registration stickers. Officer Jamie Cary recognized the vehicle, and knew that the owner "frequently slept inside the vehicle with her dog. Though the windows were darkly tinted and partly obstructed by items inside, the officers could see the dog was inside. Officer Cary knew the owner did not leave the dog unattended.

"The officers attempted to contact the owner by calling out and knocking on the windows, but received no answer. Through a partially open window, Officer Cary observed the owner lying on her back and unresponsive inside the vehicle. Fearing a medical emergency, Officer Cary was able to safely get the dog out of the vehicle and secure it.

"The 19-year-old woman was not breathing and had no pulse. Officer Cary and Field Training Officer John Gale began lifesaving measures. Emergency medical crews arrived and transported the woman to the Emergency Department at Howard Memorial Hospital, where she was treated and later released."

In 2023, officers from two incidents were honored.

Read the rest of Awards Over on page 9

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## LEGAL NOTICES

WW474

### Statement of Abandonment of Use of Fictitious Business Name

File No: 2021-F0220  
The person or persons listed below have abandoned the use of the following fictitious business name: Loet Vanderveen Legacy Editions, 12 Maple Street, Willits, CA 95490, Mendocino County.

The FBN was filed in Mendocino County on April 21, 2021. File Number 2021-F0220. Registered owners: Mas Art, LLC, 12 Maple Street, Willits, CA 95490.

This business was conducted by a Limited Liability Company.

This FBN Statement of Abandonment was filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 2, 2024.

/s/ Martha Ann Seifert  
Publication dates: February 15, 22, 29, March 7, 2024.

WW475

### Fictitious Business Name Statement

2024-F0108  
The following corporation is doing business as EURoad Travel Guides, 1816 Buckeye Road, Willits, CA 95490. Mailing address: P.O. Box 2127, Willits CA 95490.

Registered owners: Digital Aeon Inc., P.O. Box 651, Nyack, NY 10960. This business is conducted by a corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on December 2016.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 14, 2024.

/s/ Victoria Bertotti  
Publication dates: February 29, March 7, 14, 21, 2024

WW476

### Fictitious Business Name Statement

2024-F0086  
The following person or persons are doing business as Backroad Security, 7659 Hwy 29, Kelseyville, CA 95451. Mailing address: PO Box 1516, Lakeport CA 95453.

Registered owners: Richard Lynn Russell, 7659 Hwy 29, Kelseyville, CA 95451; John Keith Schiessl, 26750 N Hwy 101, Willits CA 95490; and Patrick Bruce Lawerson, 167 Wall Street, Fort Bragg CA 95437.

This business is conducted by a General Partnership. The registrants commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 2, 2024. /s/ John K. Schiessl  
Publication dates: March 7, 14, 21, 28, 2024.

### The rest of Awards

From page 8

On September 16, a 911 caller reported a 73-year-old woman was choking on food. Officers were dispatched as first responders.

"Upon arrival, Officer Rodrigo Avalos and Officer Jacob Newcomb located the woman on the kitchen floor. She was unresponsive. After confirming the woman was not breathing and had no pulse, the officers began life-saving measures.

"Officer Cody Pearson arrived and joined the life-saving actions until the emergency medical crew arrived and relieved the officers. At about 1456 hours, the medical crew was able to locate a pulse and transport the woman to the Emergency Department at Howard Memorial Hospital, where she was treated and later released."

On September 28, 2023, at about 12:35 am, a citizen came to the lobby of the Willits Police Department to report a medical emergency. "She told the dispatcher that she went to an associate's home in Willits and discovered two men unconscious and unresponsive.

"The reporting party only knew one of the men, and only by his first name. She was able to provide a general description of the location of the residence but did not know the actual street name or number.

## LEGAL NOTICES

WW476

### Fictitious Business Name Statement

2020-F0501  
The person or persons listed below have abandoned the use of the following fictitious business name: Backroad Security, 7659 Hwy 29, Kelseyville, CA 95451; Lake County.

The FBN was filed in Mendocino County on October 5, 2020. File Number 2020-F0501.

Registered owners: Richard Lynn Russell, 7659 Hwy 29, Kelseyville, CA 95451; Randall Leslie Vann, 88910 Mina Road, Covelo CA 95428; and John Keith Schiessl, 26750 N Hwy 101, Willits CA 95490.

This business was conducted by a General Partnership. The registrants commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 28, 2024. /s/ John K. Schiessl  
Publication dates: March 7, 14, 21, 28, 2024.

WW476

### Statement of Abandonment of Use of Fictitious Business Name

2020-F0501  
The person or persons listed below have abandoned the use of the following fictitious business name: Backroad Security, 7659 Hwy 29, Kelseyville, CA 95451; Lake County.

The FBN was filed in Mendocino County on October 5, 2020. File Number 2020-F0501.

Registered owners: Richard Lynn Russell, 7659 Hwy 29, Kelseyville, CA 95451; Randall Leslie Vann, 88910 Mina Road, Covelo CA 95428; and John Keith Schiessl, 26750 N Hwy 101, Willits CA 95490.

This business was conducted by a General Partnership. The registrants commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 28, 2024. /s/ John K. Schiessl  
Publication dates: March 7, 14, 21, 28, 2024.

"With a small amount of information from the reporting party, Dispatcher Michael Stainbrook researched WPD records and computer data. He was eventually able to identify a probable address in the 300 block of North Street. Dispatcher Stainbrook dispatched a police officer to the residence and notified emergency medical services.

"When first responders arrived, they discovered a 60-year-old male lying on the front porch of the residence. Emergency medical personnel confirmed the man was deceased.

"Inside the residence, officers found a 41-year-old male unconscious and unresponsive on the floor of a bathroom. Emergency medical personnel were able to transport the man via ambulance to Adventist Health Howard Memorial Hospital, where he was admitted. After several days in a comatose state, the man recovered.

"Dispatcher Stainbrook's proficiency with available databases and records systems, and his excellent investigative work, allowed emergency help to locate the man in time to save his life."

The lifesaving efforts and community care that the officers displayed in these incidents are hereby recognized with the Willits Police Department Lifesaving Award.

### The rest of BACE

From page 3

making smash burgers for the members of the club once it becomes a reality. "A smash burger starts out as a meatball and is smashed on the griddle until it's super thin and crispy around the edges. You slap that over onto some grilled onions and serve it with some minimal shredded lettuce and some homemade Big Mac sauce," he explained.

In the spirit of becoming a place where local musicians have a place to congregate, BACE (which stands for Beyond a Common Experience) held a musical-instrument swap on Saturday, March 2. Everything from acoustic and electric guitars, amplifiers, synthesizers, paraphernalia, and other collectibles were on display.

But the most intriguing aspect of the afternoon was the collection of musicians who gathered to sell the equipment they were no longer using, "culling the herd," as said by Hal Wagenet. Many of the participants have amassed large amounts of instruments and electronic gear over the years, complete with a story to go along with each piece.

Along with Wagenet, who brought several electric and

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**Brookside Registration Open**

Brookside Elementary TK / Kindergarten registration is now open. To register go to [www.willitsunified.com](http://www.willitsunified.com). Kindergarten: age 5 by Sept. 1, 2024. TK: age 5 between Sept. 2, 2024 and June 2, 2025.

**Inscripción abierta en Brookside**

La inscripción para TK / Kindergarten de Brookside Elementary ya está abierta. Para registrarse, vaya a [www.willitsunified.com](http://www.willitsunified.com).

**Computer Help**

Need help with your computer? PC, Macintosh, Android and IOS devices. Repairs, configuration and tutoring: \$50/hr. Call Liam 459-2470 or email [uicearbhall@gmail.com](mailto:uicearbhall@gmail.com)

**Help Wanted**

Join the team at the Mendocino Food & Nutrition Program. Open positions - Development Director FT. Warehouse Supervisor FT Willits Warehouse. Apply at [fortbraggfoodbank.org](http://fortbraggfoodbank.org) or on indeed.com

**Indoor Yard Sale**

Giant Indoor Yard Sale - Deep Valley Christian School, 8555 Uva Drive, Redwood Valley, (across from the Broiler). Saturday, March 9 - 8 am to 4 pm

**Willits Weekly**

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acoustic guitars, his former band mate, Mitchell Holman, a bass player with a unique sound, offered some of his creative custom instruments as well as stories of the past. Wagenet's brother, John, also brought several guitars.

Don, a local harmonica player who has been seen with several of the Willits-based bands, came to peruse the goods and try out a synthesizer. Tom Giraudauskas, of The Cult of Ours and other groups, was seen enjoying one of Considine's smash burgers. Other musicians tinkered on guitars, basses and synthesizers while reminiscing about celebrities they have known, and / or played with.

Robert Moen, who has a collection of close to 200 guitars, brought an eclectic collection of guitars and memorabilia, along with stories of his life in music. "I have a guitar that was signed by all the Beach Boys," said Moen in one of his many reminiscences. "I used to work for those guys in Big Sur. I got 13 signatures on it.

"Neil Young was playing in my front yard, under a sound check," said Moen. "I was told Neil Young, doing no circumstances, will sign my guitar. Neil doesn't endorse or deface instruments. He won't do it, so don't ask him. After the show, I grabbed my Martin and said it's already been defaced. Would he like to sign my guitar? Neil found out that I had David Crosby's signature, and I was told in no uncertain terms that he doesn't sign anything that David Crosby has signed. I told him that Ramblin' Jack Elliot had signed it and Neil grabbed the guitar and signed." In addition to the guitars, Moen creates intricate mosaic guitars which he sells at craft fairs.

For more info, visit <https://linktr.ee/bacevenue> or check out the "BACE Venue" Facebook page.

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**Deputy Probation Officer I/II**  
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**Deputy Sheriff-Coroner**  
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**Public Safety Dispatcher**  
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**Sheriff's Legal Specialist**  
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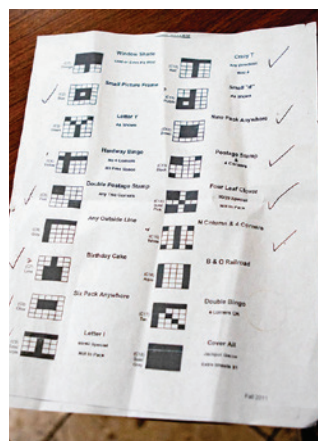
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7 3 5 4 9 2 1 6 8  
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WILLITS WEEKLY CROSSWORD

L A D S C H I C  
P I L E U P L E A N E R  
A N T W E R P T A C I T L Y  
L E E S O U T H D A K O T A  
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D E C A P I T A T E D I N N  
A S I N I N E E R I E S T  
M E N A C E S A L V E S  
T E S T B L E D



At top, from left: Many of the die-hard players bring their own good-luck charms. This guide shows the number of different ways a player can win. Marlene Brown shows the pull tabs, another way to win at the Senior Center Bingo. These piggies make an oinking sound when the caller announces a particular number. Above: Virginia Jorge and Katie Barry, although they work at the Bingo game, are able to play as well. At right: The lunch room is filled with avid bingo players.



Above, left: Virginia Jorge shows the pack of cards to be filled for the various types of Bingo games. Above, right: Caller Joe Vaccaro picks the numbers that are forced up a shoot.

Photos by Mathew Caine

# Bingo Blast

## Senior Center holds quarterly high-stakes bingo game with 12 cards and a meal for \$35

A group of Willits residents spent the afternoon making Small Picture Frames, Double Postage Stamps, Birthday Cakes, Six Packs Anywhere, Crazy Ts, Four Leaf Clovers, and other patterns, and had a ton of fun doing so. The quarterly Senior Center Bingo Blast took place last Saturday, March 2 in the dining room / bingo hall. They had to concentrate on the voice of caller Joe Vaccaro in order to find numbers on up to 12 or more cards at a time, while at the same time, talking with their friends, munching on the provided sandwiches, and arranging their good luck charms in a way that would guarantee a win or two.

In addition to filling out the myriad cards in a variety of patterns, the players were able to purchase pull tabs from Marlene Brown, with several chances to win up to \$50. Those who win lower amounts usually buy more pull tabs with the receipts, in order to increase the odds of winning more. Brown also had daubers (the ink devices which are used to mark off the numbers that are called), although most of the inveterate semi-professional players brought their own daubers so they could create a mélange of colors as they played, thus pleasing their aesthetic senses.

"This is our Bingo Blast. Or it could be called Bingo Bash," explained game organizer and Senior Center board member Virginia Jorge. "We have our regular bingo game every Friday evening. We used to have bingo once month on the first Sunday of every month, but COVID put an end to that. During the hiatus, I've had volunteers move away, pass away, and volunteers whose immune system got so low, they

can't volunteer anymore. Richard [Baker] and our bookkeeper and I came up with the idea of doing a quarterly bingo game. This is our first one. We'll have one in June, one in September, and then our famous New Year's Eve game."

For \$35, the players receive a series of cards that can be used for the various incarnations of Bingo. "They get what we call a '10 pack' and two special cards: a Blackout and a Four-Ten-Eight. They also get a meal for the \$35. Today, we are serving a choice of a ham, turkey, or roast beef sandwich with their choice of a variety of cheeses. It comes with either potato or macaroni salad, and a cookie. We started out small. For my Sunday bingos years ago, I used to prep big meals. Alex has always helped out in the snack bar and he and Jules are running the snack bar today, for us," Jorge continued.

Oh, and don't forget the piggies. They are rubber pig figurines, on each table, that when squeezed, create an oinking sound. "The first number that's pulled out of the machine by our caller is the pig number. If the caller pulls that number out during any game, everybody squeezes their pig which makes an oinking sound, and then Joe puts a quarter in this pig. If anybody bingos on that number, they get all the money that's in the blue piggy. On New Year's Eve we had a new player, Helen Simms, who is a member of Rotary, win the pig, which was worth \$50 or \$60. If nobody wins it, we roll it over to the next session."

Bingo player Linda Weldon has a system which she utilizes at each of the several bingo games she plays weekly, both in

Read the rest of **Bingo** | Over on page 11

The rest of **Plan** | From page 1

City Park is a different grant project, already funded.)

When the expanded project was authorized last June, city manager Bender said that the city would use the plan "as a tool to go after grant opportunities, and then we can set aside some general fund funding to implement some of the items as well." A company from Ashland, Oregon, Terrain Landscape Architects, was hired to create the plan – and was paid from the income generated by the water sales. (

Terrain Landscape's final East Commercial Street package, presented to the council at the February 28 meeting, received a decidedly mixed reaction from council members, who were unsure what they had, or maybe hadn't, accomplished.

Council member Greta Kanne asked: "If only some of it is implemented, how will we know if the plan is a success? Is there a certain amount that, if implemented, we can say 'Good, we executed this plan well.' If 10% were done, would that be a good thing? Are we aiming for 70%? How will we know when we're done, or were successful?"

Bender replied: "I don't think a community is ever done with planning or implementation. It's ongoing."

This, council member Larry Stranske quickly pointed out, is just like many prior plans. Stranske feels that the city is adding more projects on top of unfinished or not-yet-started projects that have been promised to Willits residents, some for years, like doing something about the Van Hotel, lighting the Wood Street parking lot, and making improvements to East Mendocino Avenue. "We haven't done anything for all these other things that we've gotten. And to have another one that's on the books, that's not going to work for me."

Kanne added: "Historically the city has created lots of plans that have not been implemented or fully implemented in the community. There's a question of Here we go again."

Bender replied: "Noteverything'sgoingtobeimplemented. Maybe we're not the greatest on implementation. We'll work on that. But before we can implement, we need a plan. We need a vision."

Mayor Saprina Rodriguez had to step down and not participate in the discussion or vote. Rodriguez and her family own and operate three businesses on East Commercial Street that, according to Willits City Attorney Jim Lance, is legally a conflict of interest even though Rodriguez would not benefit directly from any money spent on the project, including recommended sidewalk repairs.

Rodriguez had just completed major sidewalk upgrades in front of her businesses, \$35,000 paid entirely by Rodriguez, "as my responsibility as a property owner." Rodriguez also told Willits Weekly that all three of Stranske's specific issues were currently being worked on, including the Van Hotel which is finally getting some legal action against the out-of-town owners.

Despite an impressive presentation by Terrain Landscape's owner Sam Bickel, caution was definitely on all of the council members' minds. Madge Strong had previously warned that residents of town may be more concerned with filling pot holes than putting new signs and wider walkways on East Commercial Street. Council member Gerry Gonzalez added, "I don't want to be beholden to this plan if things change or there's a safety issue or public comment [on the plan]."

And on a vote of 3 to 1, with Stranske dissenting, the city council voted to accept the East Commercial Street Corridor Master Plan, even if not everyone was quite sure what would become of this vast project – except for City Manager Bender, who confidently concluded, "I suspect we'll see Sam [from Terrain] in other meetings putting forth project proposals and grant opportunities."

The rest of **Bingo** | From page 10

Willits and Ukiah. It's in the way that she sets up her cards, her daubers, and her good luck charms. Nothing is left to chance, except that everything is up to chance, the order in which the balls climb up the shoot, how they are situated in the bin, and perhaps atmospheric and environmental aspects.

"I play every Friday and then I take my dogs to the dog park, in the summer," Jorge explained. "There are free snacks and free drinks. We use the old-fashioned push cards and it's \$50 per card; \$6 to buy in and \$50 per card and you can play as many cards as you want."

Oh, and the Thrift Store is now open on Saturdays, 10 am to 2 pm.

And keep your eye out for the Senior Center's FUN-ding RAFFLE tickets in your mail box!

For more information on the Willits Harrah Senior Center, located at 1501 Baechtel Road, visit www.willitsseniorcenter.com, their Facebook page, or call 459-6826.

The U.S. Senate election to fill the late Sen. Diane Feinstein's seat – both the full term and the partial/unexpired term – have been called already, with Democrat Adam Schiff and Republican Steve Garvey to face each other in the November election.

California counties must complete and certify election results for the 2024 primary by April 4, 2024.

The rest of **Homeless** | From page 1

According to the California Budget and Policy Center, "Individuals and families are considered homeless if they do not have a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, for example, if they are living in a shelter, vehicle, or other places not meant for habitation."

Falandes spoke to an interested audience which included Supervisor John Haschak as well as Willits City Council members Madge Strong and Gerry Gonzales. Representatives from a range of organizations, including Ruthanne Volz from Willits Community Services & Food Bank, Shannon DeMuth from Community Crossroads, Jane McCabe from WELL, and a staff person from the Ukiah Building Bridges Shelter also attended, listening intently and sometimes adding comments, anecdotes and suggestions.

The Safety and Compassion presentation included many concerning facts and data, also offering input and stories from family members of those experiencing homelessness in Willits which were the most impactful, with passions rising to the surface and more than a few tears shed.

Falandes spoke to the vulnerability of this population, many of whom have one or more disabilities in addition to their lack of housing, noting that, "Predators always prey on the most vulnerable among us."

A picture emerged of an extremely challenging situation, with multiple agencies struggling to mitigate the challenges for those facing homelessness, but frequently losing funding when short-term grants or government dollars run out. These agencies are on the front lines, offering a patchwork of solutions to the many factors that affect unhomed people, including the lack of food and shelter, and adjacent issues like hygiene, safety, and medical services.

Amidst rising housing costs and an overall decrease in available housing, Willits has largely lost the services of several "Housing Navigators," who previously helped young people, elders, families, and others in the search for adequate and safe housing, as funding for this crucial program and many others has dried up.

Falandes explained: "Manzanita Services Wellness Center closed in Willits in March of 2023. As a stopgap, Mendocino County Behavioral Health Services opened a Wellness Center, with limited days and hours, based at the Willits Integrated Service Center [at 472 East Valley Street]." She continued: "The Wellness Center is open for services on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 am until 2:30 pm. It's a crucial program, but with a drastic reduction in availability from what was previously a 40-hour-a-week program."

Falandes went on to discuss a number of positive working partnerships with various local faith groups, Mendocino County Public Health, especially Behavioral Health, Willits Police Department and the county Sheriff's

The rest of **Election** | From page 1

shows only 7,418 votes have been counted so far.

One thing that's clear from what's been counted so far is Mendocino County is supporting incumbent President Joe Biden bigtime this year, at 92.30 percent of the Democratic primary vote. In 2020, Democrat Bernie Sanders won the presidential primary in Mendocino County, by 45.81%, with candidate Joe Biden receiving only 18.90%.

GOP Presidential primary candidate Donald Trump is winning the GOP primary in Mendocino County, as well as statewide. In Mendocino County, Trump has won 76.48% of the primary vote (1,346 voters) so far, with candidate Nikki Haley winning 19.43% (342 voters). In the 2020 GOP primary election in Mendocino County, as of initial results posted in the 2020 "Final Election Night Report," candidate Trump had won 91.72% of the vote.

The "jungle primary" for retiring state Assemblymember Jim Wood's seat in the Second District is still too close to call, as far as which Democratic candidate will face GOP candidate Michael Greer from Del Norte County in November. Greer has received 28% of the district-wide vote reported so far on the California Secretary of State Elections Results site.

Sonoma County Supervisor Chris Rogers – endorsed by Mendocino County supervisors John Haschak, Dan Gjerde, and Glenn McCourt – is currently narrowly leading for second place with 19.6 percent, with the next Democrat in line, Rusty Hicks, coming in at 18.9 percent. Mendocino County Supervisor Ted Williams is currently at 7.1 percent in the district count, but is leading the slate of Democratic candidates in county-only votes, receiving 21.08% of the vote in Mendocino County.

Another clear result is that, as of the Final Election Night Report, Mendocino County's bid to renew fees for the Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Program will pass handily, with 80.64% of the voters (so far) saying yes and 19.36% of county voters saying no.

The statewide results for Proposition 1, "Bonds for Mental Health Treatment Facilities," are close, with the CA SOS reporting 50.2% (1,892,455 voters) saying "Yes" and 49.8% (1,879,981 voters) saying "No."

In Mendocino County's First Supervisorial District, candidate Madeline Cline is way out in front, with 58.93% of the vote. Second Supervisorial District results show a tight race, with incumbent Supervisor Maureen Mulheren leading with 51.09% of the vote (541 voters) so far, and challenger Jacob Brown at 48.91% (516 voters). In the Fourth District, candidate Bernie Norvell has stacked up a big lead, with 81.20% of the vote (1,559 voters) compared to candidate Georgina Avila-Gorman at 18.80% (361 votes).

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank all the public safety agencies who responded to the Mendocino County Jail on March 1, 2024, for this mass medical aid incident.

Sheriff's detectives and investigators with the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office are conducting investigations in connection with the Mendocino County Fatal Incident Protocol.

Office, Adventist Hospital Health Care Navigators, and Willits Economic Localization, among others. She gave a shout-out to the successful and dynamic employment program that Mendocino College has been providing to our area.

In terms of immediate needs, she proposed a number of short-term but critical solutions, including: more effective and timely transportation and additional support to clinic appointments, pharmacies, and the emergency room, as well as hands-on and centrally located support for people who do not own or use computers, have trouble reading, or experience disorganized thinking.

In addition, Falandes spoke about the importance of accessible warming shelters. "Shelter is the answer, but we need more than just shelter to solve this problem." She went on to point out that: "Tiny houses hold a lot of potential, but just having a warming shelter during the winter months would make a huge difference here in Willits."

On a person-to-person level, Falandes emphasized the need for those who care about the homelessness issue to educate themselves with respect to the sadness, anxiety, and even resentment that often affects our behavior towards those who live on our streets and under our bridges.

She suggested that we can all be more aware of how we talk about this thorny situation, changing our language from "the homeless" to "people living without safe housing." She added: "Never underestimate the effect of eye contact or a smile. It's hard for us to really 'see' unhoused people as part of the community. The natural response is to think of them as the 'other.' The truth is most of these people have been in and around Willits for a very long time. It's so important that we counter stereotypes. It's painful to face this, but we will never solve the problem if we continually look away."

Avenues to Wellness was established by the Frank R. Howard Foundation in August 2013. ATW is a community-based wellness program offering free-of-charge health education to Willits and the surrounding areas. ATW talks are always free to the public, and donations are appreciated. The next talk is set for March 20, at the Willits Methodist Church, with local licensed acupuncturist Dianne Smalley of Abundant Health Acupuncture and Herbs. Visit www.avenuestowellness.org or call: 707-456-9676 for more information.

The rest of **Incident** | From page 1

it appeared the inmate was not choking, and multiple dosages of Narcan were administered due to a suspected drug overdose. As a result, the inmate began to show signs of recovery and improved health.

During this time a Corrections lieutenant began to perform a walkthrough of the housing module to assess the health and safety of the other male inmates housed in this specific housing module.

During an inspection of a nearby cell, the lieutenant found an unresponsive male inmate who was housed by himself. Correctional staff and personnel with the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority entered the cell and began providing medical aid to include the use of Narcan.

The lieutenant continued the walkthrough of the housing module and inspected a nearby cell which contained three male inmates. The lieutenant noticed one of the male inmates had an abnormally pale complexion and was sweating. Correctional and medical staff provided aid to the inmate to include the use of Narcan. These efforts resulted in an observed improvement in the inmate's physical condition.

The lieutenant continued the walkthrough of the housing module and inspected a nearby cell which contained one male inmate. The inmate was laying on the floor and was unconscious. Correctional staff and ambulance personnel, who had just arrived at the jail, entered the cell and provided medical aid to the inmate to include the use of Narcan.

The lieutenant continued the walkthrough of the housing module and inspected a nearby cell which contained three male inmates. The lieutenant noticed one of the inmates had an abnormally pale complexion and was sweating. As the lieutenant interacted with the inmate, he noticed the inmate began to display an altered level of consciousness.

Correctional and medical staff entered the cell and began to provide medical aid to include the use of Narcan on this specific inmate. As a result, the inmate began to show signs of recovery and improved health.

In total, five male inmates were provided medical aid for life-threatening suspected overdose conditions while being housed in the same housing module in the Mendocino County Jail.

These five male inmates were alive during onsite medical aid efforts and were subsequently transported by ambulance to a local hospital for further medical treatment for their continued life-threatening medical conditions. One inmate later died after arriving at the hospital. After next of kin were notified the Sheriff's Office released the name of the man who died: Artemio Ortega Reyes, 40, from Ukiah. Ortega Reyes was booked into the Mendocino County Jail on February 15, 2023, after being arrested by the Ukiah Police Department on open charges and active arrest warrants.

Ortega Reyes was subsequently sentenced and began serving his imprisonment at the Mendocino County Jail on March 29, 2023, with a scheduled release date of January 4, 2025.

The Sheriff's Office Coroner's Unit is conducting a coroner's investigation into the cause and classification of Ortega Reyes' death.

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank all the public safety agencies who responded to the Mendocino County Jail on March 1, 2024, for this mass medical aid incident.

Sheriff's detectives and investigators with the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office are conducting investigations in connection with the Mendocino County Fatal Incident Protocol.

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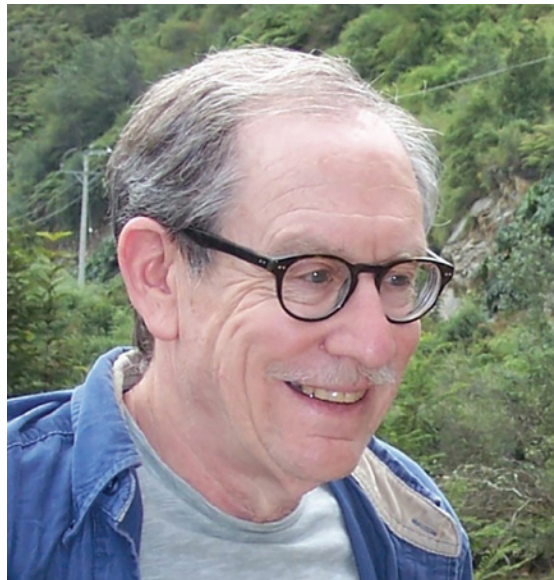
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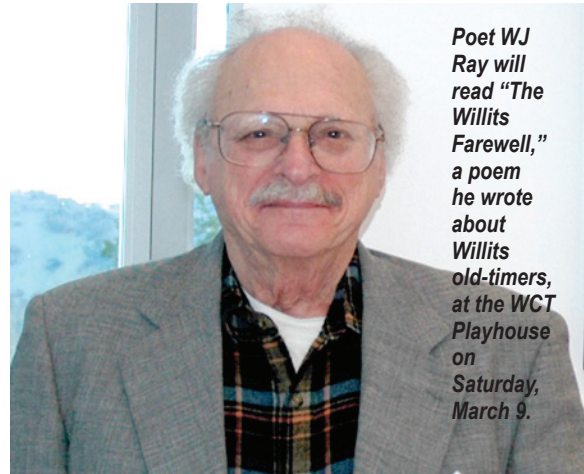


Perpetual Chaps

PASSING OF THE CROWN



Above: Local author Dan Hibshman will read two stories from his recently published book, "Of a Lifetime: Stories 1963-2023," in an entry-by-donation performance.



Poet WJ Ray will read "The Willits Farewell," a poem he wrote about Willits old-timers, at the WCT Playhouse on Saturday, March 9.

**Tribute to Willits and its characters at WCT Playhouse reading**

Submitted by WCT

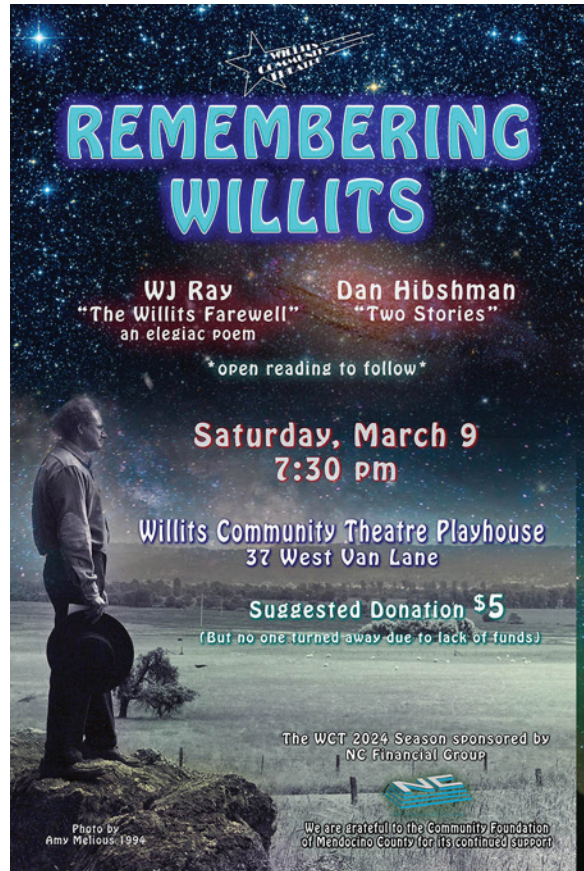
WJ Ray and Dan Hibshman will be reading works that focus on the flourishing old-timers of Willits and a local dog story in "Remembering Willits" at the Willits Community Theatre Playhouse on Saturday, March 9.

Ray will be reading his long elegy on Willits, entitled "The Willits Farewell." Hibshman will be reading two stories from his recently published book, "Of a Lifetime: Stories 1963-2023."

"The Willits Farewell" is an elegy of 220 lines, nearly the same length as Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed." In the poem, Ray catalogs scores of Willits old-timers who flourished here in the second half of the last century. The poet also offers brief comments about each person, telling how they fit into the life of Willits, at least, as the poet perceived it. The cumulative effect is quite wonderful and powerful. When poet Robin Rule heard Ray read the poem in October of last year, she said of the poem, "It's a classic! You just told part of the Willits story!"

Hibshman has been a resident of Mendocino County since 1969. He's worked in the county as an English teacher, a clerk in a natural foods store, and as a librarian in the Mendocino County Law Library. He is the author of two books, "Disquiet" and "Of a Lifetime: Stories 1963-2023." Hibshman will read two stories, "Catch" and "Lost Puppy." The later story is set on the streets of a fictionalized Willits.

The reading begins at 7:30 pm. Entry is by donation; however no one will be turned away due to lack of funds. An open reading will follow the featured readers. This event is sponsored by NC Financial Group, sponsor of WCT's 2024 season.



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