

# REAL ESTATE SECTION



## Hew owners for Summit Signal

Danny Mihelcic and Allisha Rigano take reins of railroad maintenance and heavy-equipment construction company

Summit Signal, Inc. would like to officially present our new owners, Danny Mihelcic and Allisha Rigano. Their new leadership roles mark the culmination of a three-year transition period that was successfully finalized as of December 1, 2023. Summit Signal, Inc. is a certified small business enterprise with a 20+ year history of railroad signal construction work as well as electrical work, generator installation and maintenance, and heavy equipment construction services like underground, concrete, rock, grading, asphalt paving, driveway repair, culverts, septic and water systems, and other specialty construction projects.

Danny Mihelcic is a seasoned professional with a proven track record in safety and operational efficiency. His C-10 Electrical license opened up new opportunities for Summit Signal, Inc. and he is dedicated to maintaining a high level of workmanship.

Allisha Rigano brings with her extensive experience working in contract administration, prevailing wage regulations, and business management from her 19 years starting in the field and now running the office at Summit Signal, Inc.

Additionally, our dedicated team actively engages with our home community of Willits and neighboring areas where we conduct business through volunteer efforts like participation in Rotary Club and events, contributions to youth sports, educational programs, and other local organizations.

Together Danny Mihelcic and Allisha Rigano, operating their two companies, Summit Signal, Inc. (for railroad signal work) and Danny Mihelcic Construction Services (for local and other construction projects) are looking forward to continuing to provide both our railroad customers and our local customers with superior workmanship in every project undertaken and looks forward to thriving in the future of construction

Above, left: Danny Mihelcic and Allisha Rigano working in Napa for the Napa Valley Wine Train.

Above, right: Danny Mihelcic's dump truck, crew, and equipment on a culvert and asphalt patch project for Caltrans and Pacific Earthscape near Myers Flat, CA.

Railroad Signal Maintenance for Amtrak in Oakland, CA.



## Spring Energy Bill Help

Energy bills are high right now. Visit our website, call us, or come to our Advanced Energy Center to discuss:

- The best rate plan for your situation
- Available discount programs
- Your usage. It might be time to reassess your energy habits.
- Practical winter energy savings tips

We look forward to hearing from you.

# The creative impulse

I've been rotting away. Oh, I love to write, but what I really love is making theater. That's what I was trained in when I went away to school in New York when I was 18. What a place to be as a young man. Raised in Oregon, I recall looking at the only picture in my history book of New York, the Empire State Building. I'd imagine myself on the sidewalk in that photo.

As a kid in junior high and high school, I was fortunate enough to be in schools with great arts programs. I played the saxophone in band and orchestra, was the star boy soprano in the church choir – what a shock when my voice changed and I was thrown out! What!!! That didn't stop me.

Fortunately there was a lot of theater in the greater Portland area at that time in my life. I performed at the Lake Oswego Community Theater and a big theater in Portland, the Portland Civic Theater. The Civic Theater actually had two theaters, the main stage was a conventional per centum theater and The Blue Room was a theater-in-the-round.

Bill Barksdale  
Columnist

worked in all of them as well as the high school program. When the PCT director referred me to The Neighborhood Playhouse in NYC, it was life changing.

I've begun rehearsals for a new production of the Terrence McNally masterpiece, "Mothers and Sons" with some of our area's finest actors, including 11-year-old Finn Shipp. Finn's skills as an actor are far beyond what one might expect. Other actors include Kathy Velis, the magnificent actress I've worked with on several other shows; Christopher Martineau, who is unquestionably one of our area's most versatile and skilled actors – this is our fourth show together; and experienced Ukiah-actor Greg Martin, who teaches physics and science in Ukiah as well as being the perfect actor for this show. I'm inspired and excited.

The show opens on May 31 and only runs for two weeks, so mark your calendars (or phone) and please don't miss it. We've just begun our intensive eight-week rehearsal period.

Theater tells stories, often about what ails us. "Mothers and Sons" is such a story. From the first moment, it draws you in to the lives of these four characters, telling their universal story about what a family, especially a "modern family" as Kathy calls it, is. "The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," as Shakespeare refers to the challenges of life, are healed by the innocence of a child in this story. How unexpected and appropriate.

Theater is a ritual, not real life, yet really good acting is "real life in imaginary circumstances" as my acting teacher, Sanford Meisner, used to say. He also said "an ounce of behavior is



Above, left: Mike A'Dair and Christopher Martineau portray father and son in Willits Community Theatre's presentation of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." Above, right: Gay Sibley takes to the stage in the imaginative comedy "Dead Man's Cell Phone."



worth a pound of words!" Behavior – reaction and emotion – is the engine that fuels and sparks life, real life, as the story unfolds. This is the compelling drive that always sucks me into great storytelling by a master like McNally, one of America's greatest playwrights.

I invite you and your imagination to take a journey with us. In the play, "Dead Man's Cell Phone," a woman finishes her lunch in a café while the annoying cell phone of the man at the next table rings incessantly. She discovers he's dead and she impulsively steals his phone. That changes her life. She meets his eccentric mother, has an eye-opening drink with his mistress, is murdered by a spy, meets the man in hell, comes back to life, and falls in love with the dead man's brother in the glow of a barbecue that the man's mom has walked into to commit suicide so that she can spend eternity with her favorite son – a modern comedy!

How about that "Shirley Valentine"? A lonely English housewife feeds the steak intended for her husband's dinner to the starving dog of their vegetarian neighbor. Hubby throws his scrambled eggs in Shirley's lap, and she decides to run away from her old life and ends up in Greece, where she falls in love, discovers her real self, and reinvents her life. Inspiring. Almost every one of us has had that fantasy.

In Tennessee Williams' groundbreaking masterpiece, "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," Maggie struggles to find her self-respect and the original actors. There's something about a live play that seduces the audience member into a visceral, direct connection with their own psyche. Sometimes the story is funny; sometimes it's something different – both can entertain while taking you on a journey deep inside, perhaps even spark a transformation in your life.

Go on this journey with us during our short two-week run at Willits Community Theatre, beginning on May 31 and concluding on June 9. If you've never been to a live theater production, you'll find something here that inspires you. If you've been before, experience "Mothers and Sons." It's a brilliant play that draws you in to an unexpected adventure. Don't miss it. Mark your calendar. You might even want to become a part of the excitement of making theater. Many lifelong friendships have begun at WCT. Come alive! That's what the creative impulse is all about.

Bill Barksdale was inducted into the 2016 Realtor® Hall of Fame, and served as Chair of the County of Mendocino Assessment Appeals Board settling property tax disputes between the County Assessor & citizens and businesses. DRE# 01106662, Coldwell Banker Mendocino Realty Inc. Read more of Bill's columns on his blog at [www.bbarksdale.com](http://www.bbarksdale.com). 707-489-2232



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OPEN HOUSE SPECIAL: 5" wide x 3" tall color display ad: \$80 on one-run basis

# A few spring cleaning items that get missed

Spring cleaning is kind of like exercising – the benefits are great, but it's hard to get yourself to do it. Here's a little pep talk about why spring cleaning is worth the effort (and hey, I believe cleaning can count as exercise, so you can feel twice as good about your efforts).



Richard Selzer  
Columnist

My refrigerator coils. You could also use a soft, flexible brush. Just be sure not to punch a hole in the coil, which would allow condensing gas to escape and cause a significant repair issue. Generally, the cleaning takes less than five minutes, not counting the procrastination time and the time to move the fridge.

**Dishwasher cleaning filter**  
Some dishwashers have a self-cleaning filter, but for those that don't, you need to clean it manually. How do you know when? If your dishes aren't as clean (with little food specks) or you might notice an unpleasant smell. I recently discovered that my dishwasher has two filters. Check your owner's manual for details. Consider cleaning the filter every month or so with hot water and an old toothbrush. If it's been a while since you cleaned it last, maybe scrub the filter with a little dish soap.

**Dryer duct**  
You may know that you should clean the lint trap before every load of laundry, but did you know you should also deal with lint buildup in the dryer duct? A blocked duct is an energy suck and a fire hazard. Lint can restrict airflow, which leads to the dryer having to run longer to do the same job – and as with the other appliances, you'll waste energy and make the motor work longer, therefore reducing the life of the motor.

Because lint is a great medium to start a fire, it can be especially dangerous in a dryer duct where super-hot air blows over it constantly.

Refrigerator coils  
If you have a big fridge or one that's wedged into a tight space, it can be a pain in the tush to move it so you can get access to the back of the appliance. But, periodically (maybe once or twice a year), it's important to shimmy your refrigerator out of its nook to clean the coils. Coils are the heat exchangers that expel heat from the fridge into the house, and when they are dirty, the coils cannot transfer heat efficiently.

The inside temperature of the refrigerator must remain cold enough to prevent food from spoiling, so allowing lint monsters to dust bunnies to insulate the coils simply means your refrigerator will work harder and longer to achieve its cold-temperature goal. Dirty coils result in higher electricity bills and a shorter overall life of the motor.

Most residential refrigerators do not require any special expertise or equipment to clean the coils. Check your owner's manual for details, which can be found online, unless you are one of those rare individuals who can put your hands on the hard copy when you need to.

I use my vacuum cleaner brush attachment to clean



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2 homes on 2.3+ acres. Both have 1 bed and 1.5 baths. Solar hot water and PG&E hookup. Two springs and dual cisterns with seven 2500-gallon tanks. Separate driveways, garage, barn area, and greenhouse space. 752 blueberry plants, hiking trails and more! PRESENTED AT: \$647,000

1-bed, 1-bath cottage sits on 0.09+/- acres. Attached garage, office/bonus room, and indoor laundry with washer, dryer, refrigerator, and kitchen stove included. Also offers a guest house for extended stays, RV parking, and a locking storage shed. PRESENTED AT: \$385,000

Situated on a large lot with Main Street frontage! 2 bed, 2 bath home plus office, also has a large 20'x40' metal shop with two roll-up doors that can also be accessed from the rear alley. Home is in great condition and move-in ready. Zoned ML for your home business. PRESENTED AT: \$550,000

Possibility of Dual Living Spaces. 2.75+/- acres, owned grid tie solar system, inground pool, main level has 1800 +/- sq. ft. pellet stove, floor to ceiling windows, kitchen with island and all appliances included. 2-car garage, detached 22x32 shop with barn side door for RV. PRESENTED AT: \$825,000

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# Reviewing your tax return

Greetings Tax Filers,

The busiest tax-preparation months are behind us. Most of you, likely, have already filed your taxes, or will do so by April 15. It's a big accomplishment to prepare and file your taxes. For those of you who have extended, let us know if we can help. There are many tax-rule changes, and reading IRS publications can be daunting. It is a relief to get them filed and move on to other tasks...



Nicholas Casagrande  
Columnist

**There is so much to learn by stepping back and reviewing your return.** NOW is a time for new insights and habits that can serve you well in reaching your financial goals. Here are a couple of simple things to do while things are fresh in your mind:

- 1. Truly understand your financial situation.** How much did you earn? What deductions and credits did you take? Where did you spend your money? What returns did you receive on monies paid?
- 2. Did you make the most of tax-saving opportunities?** Can you reduce the amount of money you owe through tax-smart tools – maximizing deductions, investing in your retirement, taking advantage of tax credits? I can't tell you how many times I've helped people redirect the payment they would send to the IRS and instead direct it into their future.
- 3. Withholding too much or not enough?** If you are getting big refunds, there are better ways to use that money that you are "loaning" to the U.S. government. Make every dollar work hard for you.
- 4. Review your retirement plans.** Are you maxing out your work-sponsored retirement plan – this will reduce your annual tax bill. Are you capturing the maximum of your employer contributions?
- 5. Prioritize your debt payments.** Make sure you are paying the highest interest-rate debts first. Be careful of the balance-transfer credit card approach, as this might not be the best route.
- 6. Anything big happening in the year ahead?** As in starting a business, buying a house, making an addition to the family, changing jobs? Life events can impact your taxes.

Let's take an hour to get to know your tax return so your monies are working hard and next year's tax prep and filing is smooth and low stress.

My best,  
Nick

Nicholas Casagrande is an accountant and a financial advisor. His firm, NC Financial Group, is a wealth-management firm, serving individual clients as well as small-to-medium-sized businesses. Client work includes personal and corporate taxes, investment planning, insurance, and real estate.



### 129.8+/- Acres Outstanding Ranch Property

Move to the country and enjoy the ranch lifestyle on this lovely acreage. There is a gorgeous lodge style home with 3 bedrooms, 3 baths. It features a vaulted ceiling in the spacious living room, a large rocked fireplace, an open floorplan into the kitchen and dining area. The master suite is on the main level with a large closet and an adjacent bath. Upstairs there are 2 bedrooms, a sitting area and storage closets. The barn is 40x60, lots of space for hay, equipment and 2 stalls for horses. There are 5 fenced pastures. There is so much to see here.  
**\$1,695,000**



### 10.17+/- Acres Pine Mountain Property



Private setting with level building site, spring water, power on site, a couple of storage units. 15 minutes from town, nice neighborhood.  
**\$189,000**



### Commercial Building For Sale

This 8,140 sq. ft. building is a one story structure. There is a lot of space in this large open floor plan to design different uses. Good visibility and a highly trafficked area. Close to Safeway and mixed shopping. 1,200+/- sq. ft. of storage plus office space and bathroom. Excellent location.  
**\$489,000**

### 22+/- Level Park-Like Acres

This beautiful land borders the South Fork of the Eel River. There are many open meadows throughout for lovely easy building sites. There is paved road access and PG&E on the corner of the property. Primary tree types are redwood and fir, with some mixed madrone and oak. It is zoned 12 which allows for residential, commercial up to Industrial use, many possibilities. It is approximately 15 minutes west of Laytonville right off of Branscomb Road.  
**\$230,000**

### Residential Building Lot on Holly and Poplar

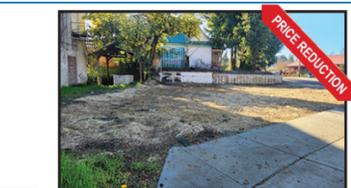


All utilities are available, convenient location in town.  
**\$100,000**



### 3.3+/- Level Acres

Great opportunity for a commercial business or investment property. There is a 1,700+/- sq. ft. office building with 4 separate offices and 2,646+/- storage attached. The metal shop is 4,608+/- sq. ft. with drive thru bays and roll up doors. Approximately 3 acres are paved. There is a new septic system and city water. Used previously for years as a truck shop business. Many more details call for information.  
**\$660,000**



### Level Commercial Lot on Main Street - Hwy. 101

Great visibility for a business. It may be possible to have a residence as well as a business location. All utilities are available.  
**\$149,000**



### Beautiful Level Lot in Town

Zoned commercial but could have a residence and a business with approval from the City of Willits. Convenient location, pretty spot.  
**\$79,500**



For information or an appointment to view please call:

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### Luxury Dual-Home Retreat with Potential Rental Income \$649,500



2.64 acres between Ukiah and Willits, this property offers two homes. The main home features Knotty Pine Open Beam ceilings, forced air insert wood stove, Waterproof Luxury Vinyl plank flooring, and Central Surround Sound. Gourmet kitchen with granite countertops, Stainless Steel appliances with Dual Ovens, and cabinets galore.

Connecting laundry room with Pantry and bath. Primary suite features a walk in closet and jetted tub. Large wrap-around deck, central heat & A/C, Fiber-Cement siding, and an attached 2-car garage. The second home has 1 bedroom, 1-1/2 baths, an attached 2 car garage, Metal Roof, Walk-In closet, Knotty Pine Open Beam ceiling, Wrap-Around Deck and Brazilian Hardwood Flooring throughout. The bath has Marble Flooring and a shower with Jetted Tub. Possible potential to have rental income, as the property includes an unfinished apartment, storage building, and a two-story outbuilding with a deck.



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