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New mental health care system up and running

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A report from representatives of the two companies that provide mental health services in Mendocino County received a rousing endorsement from members of the Mendocino County Mental Health Board during a Wednesday meeting in Laytonville.

After a whirlwind presentation by Mark Montgomery of Ortner Management Group and Dan Anderson of Redwood Quality Management Company concerning their activities over the past month and a half, Mental Health Board member Jane McCabe exclaimed "Huzzah! Huzzah!" and began to clap.

"I am giving you a standing ovation," said

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Health
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Filing period open for November election

Jennifer Poole
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The filing period has opened for the November 5, 2013 "consolidated districts" election. Candidates have from July 15 through August 9 to file "Declaration of Candidacy" forms for this fall's election. Seats are up for election on the Willits Unified School District Board of Trustees, the Brooktrails Township Community Services District Board, and the Little Lake Fire Protection board.

Those interested in running for election to these volunteer boards can find a Candidate Information Packet with useful information about the process of running for office on the Mendocino County web site at <http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/acrc/candidateinfo.htm>.

On the school board, unusually, four seats are up for election: the seats currently held by board chair Cynthia Carni, Bob Harper and Christopher Neary, and Alex Bowlds. Usually boards with five members have two seats up for election one year, then three seats contested two years later. The school board has two appointed candidates right now, however: Bowlds was appointed last November to replace Robert Kirkpatrick,

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Filing
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The new firehouse would provide more spacious bays than the current tight squeeze

Photo by Maureen Moore

Fire Tax Voters to decide

The Little Lake Fire Protection District will ask fire district voters to approve a new \$14 fire tax this November to help build a new firehouse.

The tax measure, which will raise the cost for district property owners from \$60 to \$74 per unit, per year, must be approved by two-thirds of the voters in the November 5 election to pass.

The total budget for a new firehouse building is \$3.3 million, said Little Lake administrative staffer Nancy Stipe. Fire Chief Carl Magann is out of the office for a couple of weeks.

The district has \$800,000 in the bank for the project. The USDA has approved a \$2.8 million low-interest, fixed-rate loan to the district, contingent on the fire tax measure passing. The interest rate on the loan, Stipe said, would be a maximum of 3.75 percent.

A vacant piece of property inside the district is one unit, and a lot or parcel with a house is two units, with any additional detached structure adding another unit.

The current firehouse at 74 East Commercial Street was built in 1951 and is not earthquake-safe. The roof leaks, and it's too small for standard, modern fire engines, Stipe said. Little Lake's Fire Rescue unit – "the engine that goes out of here the most," she said – had to be specially made to fit in the building. – Jennifer Poole



See Tuesday's grass fire - Page 9
The heat of the fire ripples up in front of LLFD firefighters

Photo by Shannon Demuth



College's North County Center to open in August

Mendocino College's new, sleek Commercial Street campus will open its doors to students on August 5.

Paid for with Measure W money, the \$4 million building designed by Santa Rosa-based TLCD Architects is receiving finishing touches by workers this month.

"This does not feel like someone's elementary school," Mendocino College's Mark Rawitsch said, as he opened the building's main door during a tour of the Mendocino College North County Center.

Inside, rooms can be opened into other rooms; the new front desk has a view of the entire building.

To one side there is a small room: think study area or a meeting room. "Willits residents could take classes broadcast from somewhere else," Rawitsch said. "We tried to be more

creative with how space is used."

When talking to architects, he said, Rawitsch stressed he wanted the center to be a little "Willitsy."

Work was still being done last week.

"We are moving furniture in today," Director of Facilities Mike Adams said Monday, while completion of the center's landscaping, paving the driveway, ceiling work and other details are underway, he added.

"There are different folks in there who can work together simultaneously," Adams said.

Students arriving at the campus may pull around in back of the building where parking spots have been made on the foundation of an old industrial building on the four-acre site. To get inside the building, or to sit outdoors in front of the building, you have to enter from the north side.

"There is a major amount of landscaping going on in front, and that provides a little screen," Adams said.

Mendocino Transit Authority is planning a bus stop to serve both directions on Commercial Street, according to MTA's Dan Baxter. He said he will meet soon with city officials to discuss the project.

"Our preference is to have a shelter, but there has to be room," Baxter said.

County voters approved Measure W in 2006. The measure's \$67.5 million is the funding source for the college's Willits center, as well as construction and renovations at its Lake County campus.

Measure W monies also have funded improvements at the college's main campus on Low Gap Road in

Read the rest of
College
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Brooktrails cat tests positive for leptospirosis

Raccoons suspected to be the carriers

Cat Lee
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A young cat from a Brooktrails home was taken to the emergency vet in Santa Rosa recently, after nearly dying of renal failure. The animal was tested for and diagnosed with "leptospirosis," a bacterial disease that can spread from animals to humans, although it's very rare in cats.

Raccoons are suspected to be the transmission agents in this case; the local USDA trapper has trapped and euthanized raccoons living in the neighborhood.

The cat received follow-up care at East Hill Veterinary Clinic and is recovering at home.

The cat was "quite

Read the rest of
Raccoons
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Supes don't budge on ad hoc committee issue

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Supervisors on Tuesday approved a response to a grand jury report which criticized the board's use of ad hoc committees (AHCs) to perform county business that could be done using standing committees. The use of ad hoc committees did not "afford the public sufficient notice or opportunity or meaningful participation in county government," the grand jury report stated

The report examining "The Board of Supervisors Standing Committees" was a response to the county's recent trend of relying on AHCs for specialized, issue-oriented board business.

Since 2011, according to the grand jury report, although supervisors have been appointed to each of the board's four standing committees, none of those committees has been activated. One reason could be that standing committees are subject to Brown Act rules regarding public notice and record-keeping; AHCs are not.

The grand jury found Mendocino County's use of AHCs is "not consistent with the intent of the Brown Act" and "does not conform to the accepted practices of other counties."

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Supes
Over on Page 11



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Puppy Love

HMH seeks another therapy dog

Miss Holly, Howard Memorial Hospital's pet therapy dog, enjoys some attention from Howard staffer Gidget Bowman. The hospital is looking for another certified Pet Therapy dog to join its volunteer Pet Therapy team. If you have a certified dog - or are interested in learning how to acquire certification - please call Becky Hope, volunteer coordinator, at 456-3245.



One of the spring lambs born right here in Willits
Photo by Maureen Moore

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Born & Raised

Supporting Mendocino County livestock

Born and Raised in Mendocino County is a non-profit organization which each year raises funds to be donated back to youth exhibitors who choose to buy their auction lambs from a Mendocino County rancher.

Maureen Moore
Designer & Photographress
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There are many top-quality lamb breeders in Mendocino County, and the program really aims to reward kids who support those ranchers, or who take pride in running and improving their own breeding program on their own farms.

Jerry and DeeDee Nunn spearhead the project, which offers businesses and individuals a chance to display advertising on a prominently located board at the upcoming Redwood Empire Fair in August and at the Mendocino County Fair and Apple Show in Boonville in September.

Monies gained from the advertising go to award exhibitors who place in the top three of their weight groups in the market classes, as well as to scholarships and hardship awards and those with grand champion or reserve grand champion titles.

Advertising options range from \$25 to \$200 and over. Anyone wishing to help contribute to this program is encouraged to contact Jerry Nunn at 621-1391.

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