

Willits Weekly

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A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits



Free – but donations accepted

Thursday, June 20, 2013

Edition No. 8

Skunk is Saved

\$300,000 from Save the Redwoods to get train running again

Jennifer Poole
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The Skunk Train is expected to be running again out of Willits by the beginning of July, thanks to the Save the Redwoods League, which has purchased a \$300,000 option for an easement along the railroad line.

Skunk CEO Robert Pinoli said he expected full service to be restored by mid-July.

Tunnel repairs – which were projected to cost \$300,000 – will start immediately, Pinoli said. The collapsed tunnel that shut down the Skunk Train was a few miles east of Fort Bragg, but because all the Skunk Train equipment was at the Fort Bragg depot, no trains have been running out Willits since then, either.

In April 2012, Save the Redwoods spent \$7 million to purchase the 426-acre Noyo River Redwoods property along switchback section of the Skunk Train near Willits. The property was later transferred to the Mendocino Land Trust, with the help of a grant from California's Wildlife Conservation Board.

The \$300,000 option will be a credit towards the full purchase price for a conservation or a public access easement along the full 40 miles of the railroad line between Fort Bragg and Willits. Save the Redwoods will have the land appraised and "figure out in the coming year what we want to buy," the conservation group's chief operating officer Harry Pollack told the San Francisco Chronicle.

There has been no discussion yet, Pinoli told Willits Weekly, about what the full offer might be for the easement.

The deal went down fast. "I began formal discussion with Save the Redwoods on June 3," Pinoli said. "They had a board meeting on June 6, where I understand we received unanimous support." Pinoli started working with Save the Redwoods staffers on a contract on Friday, June 7, and the agreement was completed on June 14.

A "public access" easement, Pinoli said, wouldn't mean the public would have free access to the property – "it is a functioning, working railroad," he said – but it does mean "the public now has a corridor set aside for future generations in which they can always see redwoods: which means get on the train and go for a ride."

Willy's New Clothes

WFD Cowboy gets ready for 2013 events



Even though Willits is known as the "Gateway to the Redwoods," we also have another important title that many forget about, except during the two weeks of Frontier Days: "Keeper of a Muffler Man."

Maureen Moore
Designer & Photographress
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"Muffler Man?" "A what, now?" "I've never heard of a Muffler Man." "Where is that?"... Well, right smack-dab on East Commercial Street.

The Willits Frontier Days rodeo grounds is the home of the Willits Muffler Man: the 20-foot-plus fiberglass Cowboy Willy who stands as tall as the bleachers with his Stetson hat, greeting guests as they come through the gates for the Fourth of July festivities.

Willy is one of just over 20 Muffler Men in California, though others can be found all across the country. A complete map, as well as lots of other interesting and fun Muffler Man information, can be found at www.RoadsideAmerica.com.

The first figure was made for a cafe on Route 66 in Arizona in 1962 by Bob Prewitt, who owned Prewitt Fiberglass. Steve Dashew purchased the business from Prewitt in 1963. Steve had some fiberglass skills gained in his previous boat business, and he was looking for something to do during the slow season. Dashew founded International Fiberglass, located in Venice, CA, and started selling the statues to retail businesses as "attention-getters," though 1974. Individual statues originally cost

Read the rest of **Willy** | Over on Page 4



City faces 2013-2014 budget shortfall

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The City of Willits faces a more than \$300,000 shortfall in its 2013-2014 budget if the city council fails to find a way to cut costs, Willits Finance Director Joanne Cavallari told councilmembers last week during a meeting to help finalize a draft budget.

"I have not closed that deficit in this budget," Cavallari said, "and I am waiting for council direction as to how that should be done."

One program potentially on the chopping block was the Willits Local First program, which promotes events like Black Friday and the Willits Hometown Celebrations.

But the council approved \$1,000 to help fund the program on a 3-2 vote. Council members Madge Strong, Ron Orenstein and Holly Madrigal voted "yes," while council members Larry Stranske and Bruce Burton objected.

Willits Chamber of Commerce President Ron Moorhead told the council one downtown business generated \$1,300 in sales taxes (not all local taxes) from one event.

Greta Kanne of The Book Juggler also spoke in favor of Local First funding, saying she has seen the benefits of such events to downtown Willits.

"You will be, in effect, voting to end Hometown Celebrations," Kanne said. "I encourage you to dig deep and find that \$1,000."

"The return in tax revenue far outweighs \$1,000," Moorhead noted. "One event, one day, one merchant: \$1,300 in sales tax."

The county's Economic Development and Financing Committee also sought to keep city funding.

Strong moved to give EDFC \$1,000, \$3,000 less than the

Read the rest of **Shortfall** | Over on Page 3



Top: Randy Spears and Angie and Mike Miller pose with the almost-ready Cowboy Willy; Above: Willy's huge belt buckle; below: Willy, mid-sanding; bottom left: Randy paints on stitching on Willy's belt loops

Photos by Maureen Moore of Mphotographress.com



City may hire manager to lead WCA's nonprofit transition

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Willits released a plan this week to hire a manager to oversee the Willits Cultural Arts Commission's transition to a nonprofit organization.

The city's proposal requires the new manager to perform a myriad of tasks, including answering phone calls and emails, reviewing invoices, organizing volunteers and readying for Center for the Arts events.

Commissioners Laurel Miller and June Ruckman, like others on the commission, support hiring a person to do those tasks and to oversee the nonprofit status change.

"When I go down there, it's for four hours. Four hours is gone in an instant," Miller said.

"I think this position is so important; I think it is key to this

Read the rest of **WCA** | Over on Page 11

Council nixes Burton's balanced budget request

During an evening workshop last week, Councilman Bruce Burton said he wanted city staff to return with a balanced budget for the council to approve.

"That is their job. Our job is to tell them how to do it," Burton said.

Zack Cinek
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His request failed to pass by a single vote.

At the same meeting, the council approved money for Local First and a county Economic Development and Financing Committee.

Councilman Ron Orenstein was critical of the city's budget-making process. "We could decimate our police

Read the rest of **Burton's** | Over on Page 11

'Handouts Are Not Helping'

A better approach to Willits' panhandling woes

Cat Lee
Reporter
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The Willits Police Department, Willits Chamber of Commerce, and Willits Community Services and Food Bank have joined up to educate the business community and the public about the "Handouts Are Not Helping" program.

According to Chamber President Ron Moorhead: "Handouts Are Not Helping" is not a new program but a revamped existing program.

WPD Chief Gerry Gonzalez noted that as Willits residents head into the summer months, the number of panhandlers tends to increase. "They float in for drugs, the marijuana game that we have up here," he said.

The program came together in response to increased "concerns we were getting from citizens ... feeling threatened by aggressive panhandling," Moorhead said. "Aggressive panhandling is not helped by handouts."

Fort Bragg was the first community in the county to implement this kind of a program, he said and, using that and other similar programs as models, "we fashioned it for us."

The general consensus of those involved is there are three basic categories of homeless people in our town: the traveling 20-somethings, exploring and adventuring, but often times using public resources and charity to subsidize the journey; the working poor who, for whatever reason, aren't making it, often times with kids, perhaps living in vehicles; and our year-round locals, on-the-streets during the day and camping by area creeks at night, many dealing (or not dealing) with drug, alcohol, and mental health issues.

The purpose of the "Handouts Are Not Helping" program, officials explain, is to encourage citizens, tourists and businesses to give their donations to social service agencies, churches or other charitable organizations rather than giving "handouts" directly to panhandlers, no matter which category they are in.

"We want to help them, but help them in the right way – a good way," Moorhead said.

"There's always gonna be people who give money," Gonzalez said, "but the more we get the word out that we're not gonna subsidize your lifestyle – try to make it less hospitable – we're dissuading the behavior which is at best

Read the rest of **Handouts** | Over on Page 9

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

What a difference a year makes

To the Editor:

Howard Hospital, what has happened to the patient-friendly and customer-friendly small-town hospital we had?

Back in 2011, I had the misfortune to be hospitalized five times. Two times for elective knee replacements, and three for emergency surgeries. As you can imagine, the hospital bills were staggering. By the grace of God I had purchased my own insurance the year before. Still, the amounts left over after insurance had paid were prohibitive. I received several statements and finally called to inquire about financial assistance. It was granted, and the friendly people in the hospital's finance department were a pleasure to work with.

Fast forward to 2012.

I had some lab work done on two different occasions, in September 2012 and December 2012.

I received one statement on those accounts after my insurance had paid. Not able to pay at that time, I called and inquired about the same assistance program. Only now I was talking to someone in St. Helena. Something seemed very different! She barely seemed to comprehend the program I was asking about. Finally she understood, and the paperwork was sent. I filled it out and returned it on January 22, 2013. (It was mailed to St. Helena.) I did not hear back from them until March 25, 2013. Assistance was denied.

I called to inquire why it had been denied, since my wages had dropped drastically since 2012 when assistance was approved.

The woman I spoke with said, "Well, your tax returns don't show that." I said, "Well the new returns would, but I don't have them yet." They were basing their denial on information that was over a year old. She said I could reapply. The amount of paperwork required was daunting. I then asked her if I could arrange to make payments. She said: "Yes, you will receive another statement, and you can go from there."

That was the end of March 2013. I never received another statement from them on either account.

It should be noted that this is about the same time that Adventist Health consolidated its billing function for all five of its hospitals in its newly formed "Adventists Health Northern Network." The billing center would now be in Windsor, and about a dozen Howard Memorial Hospital employees were affected. Patients at Howard Hospital no longer have a friendly, familiar voice to answer their billing questions.

I never heard another word from them until May 26, 2013, when I got a bill from a collection agency for the first bill. I immediately called the number listed at Adventist Financial Services and asked why? "Well, you didn't pay."

I asked why I hadn't received a statement. I was told that the hospital no longer had a record of that account since it was sent to collections, and that I would have to contact that agency about the matter.

I asked about the other account and was told it was "in the chute" to go to collections that week.

I asked how I could stop that from happening. "Pay the bill right now," she said.

"Can I make a payment on it?" I inquired. "No the whole thing has to be paid," she said. "That is the only way."

I asked her why I had not received any more statements after the original one. She had to ask her supervisor. "Well, if the client doesn't pay after the first one, we assume they aren't going to pay, so we save on postage by not mailing out multiple statements." What??

I asked, "Even if a payment has been made on the account?" (which I had made on this one).

She said, "Yes."

Well then, how the heck is a person to know how much more they owe? What is happening here? This has all

The Rules: **LETTERS**

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters from area residents, focusing on Willits issues, activities, events and people, have priority. Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred.

Letters & Commentaries must have a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No anonymous letters will be published.

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taken place in the last six months! Not a year. Not two. Six months!!!!

Is Adventist Health that hard up for cash?

Frank R. Howard Hospital has a reputation for being a treasured gem in our small community. The physicians and nurses and staff provide patient care that is unequalled. And for us to have this in Willits is such a blessing.

In the years before I had insurance, the staff in the back offices of financial services were people we knew. Friendly people who were on your side and eager to help you work through the maze of higher and higher hospital bills. They cared as much about the patient as the doctors and nurses at Howard.

Now, a year later, that is not the case. My impression of the Adventist Health System Finance Department is that they could care less about the people they are tossing to the proverbial wolves.

I should note that I have taken care of those bills. But, what about the people who don't have any recourse but to be at their mercy?

What has happened to our friendly little small-town hospital?

Nothing good has come from the ever-growing list of charges that Adventist has implemented so far. Is this the price we have to pay for the new hospital?

Please, Howard Hospital, bring back our friendly, small-town, superior service. We don't want you to be "just like all the others."

Roni McFadden, Willits

Disabled travelers

To the Editor:

Willits business owners: I challenge you to implement state and federal disability laws, compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), making good faith choices to conform your businesses to these laws.

Willits could become a magnet for disabled travelers – this could help after the bypass – if we'd polish it up and publicize a list of all inspected and approved ADA accessible locations. Disabled visitors can't choose which businesses to patronize blindly! From a 75-year-old, wheelchair-bound Willits resident.

Betty Spence, Willits

Forum addresses many issues

To the Editor:

An educational forum on "Traffic, Tourists, Taxes & Main Street - How the Bypass Would Change Willits" spurred lively discussion at Little Lake Grange on Sunday June 9. Five panelists presented information on the topics, followed by Q&A and community comments.

Sheriff Tom Allman moderated, and the panelists were: Christopher Martin, David Partch, Mayor Holly Madrigal, Richard Willoughby and Pete Swanton. More than 100 people attended

Christopher Martin presented charts showing that Caltrans had projected traffic volumes growing by 2 percent per year, whereas actual volumes have remained flat for the past 20 years. Caltrans also assumed the bypass would serve local trips, which Martin showed was very unlikely (eight miles vs. two miles to cross town). Caltrans used those assumptions to justify the need for a four-lane freeway bypass, rejecting any consideration of two-lane options.

David Partch reviewed the costs and benefits of the proposed bypass. The two-lane "Phase I" project is slated to cost \$242 million, but that almost doubles when bond interest is added. The cost per mile of this project is about five times the state average, Partch said.

Based on average minutes saved for the through traffic using the completed four-lane bypass, Partch figured that taxpayers would be paying as much as \$108 for each person-hour of reduced travel time over a 20-year period, when interest on the bond is included.

Mayor Madrigal pointed out that, if about 25 to 30 percent of the current traffic on Highway 101 uses the bypass (as Caltrans projects), there will be a major hit to tourist-oriented businesses in town. In turn this will impact the city's sales tax revenue, which represents about 40 percent of general fund income.

Richard Willoughby of North Valley Bank and local businessman Pete Swanton both spoke about the need to prepare for a post-bypass future by finding ways to draw people and businesses to Willits. Willoughby warned that it is crucial to prevent freeway commercial development at either the southern or northern interchanges, as this would further hurt our local businesses. Swanton suggested we develop a "brand" for why tourists would come here, such as "Wild West" (the longest-running rodeo), trains, Roots of Motive Power, Kinetic Carnival, etc. He noted the success of places such as Ferndale and Ashland, Oregon.

Audience members included three other Willits City Council members besides the mayor. County Supervisor John McCowen mentioned that Caltrans will provide only limited access to the property east of the southern interchange, but the northern interchange already has commercially zoned land. (The bypass and both interchanges are in the unincorporated county, not in City of Willits jurisdiction.)

Ron Moorhead, president of the Willits Chamber of Commerce, liked some of the ideas for "branding" Willits. Ellen Dreil said she wasn't ready to concede a post-bypass future; instead she wants Willits to be known as the little town that stopped Caltrans. A variety of other comments, both pro and con, rounded out the almost three-hour program.

Madge Strong, Willits

Needing your help

To the Editor:

A dear friend of mine and long-time member of the community, Tracy (Caldwell) LeGris, is very sick and has been in the hospital for several weeks.

What originally started as strep throat has progressed into an illness bad enough that Tracy is in the ICU at this time, on a ventilator and sedated.

Being an important part of Willits for so long, Tracy has had many visitors, hoping to show their support for her speedy recovery. While this is very much appreciated, the family has asked that everyone try and postpone their visiting until a later date so Tracy can focus on recovery and help her vitals remain stable and calm. When Tracy is ready for visitors we will let the community know.

At the time of press, Tracy was removed off of the ventilator, still in ICU, but a little more on the mend.

We have set a trust fund up recently in Tracy Legris' name at North Valley Bank to help her with her finances. Contributions of any amount will help.

Monies collected at the newly constructed wishing well in the new garden under the big statue of Cowboy Willy at the Willits Frontier Days rodeo grounds will also go to help the family.

Thank you for your help.

Marcy Barry, Willits

Tom Tilton Gymnasium, thanks

To the Editor:

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to those who helped me throughout the process of getting the Baechtel Grove Middle School gymnasium named after Tom Tilton.

Tina Ellis and Kristin Vesey Miler, you both have supported me 100 percent during this time, offering encouragement and attending meetings with me. This was essential, because it gave me the determination to forge ahead.

Saprina Rodriguez, thank you for always giving me faith, and telling me to keep at it. "What if they say no?" I remember asking you. You told me not to accept no for an answer. That conversation stayed with me and gave me confidence.

Holly Madrigal, thank you. As the mayor you played a key role in this. Your professionalism at the city council meeting where the resolution was passed was admirable. When my agenda item was pulled from the consent calendar, you calmly helped it pass unanimously by bringing up key points.

Bruce Burton, thank you for pulling my agenda item so that it could be discussed. Had you not done that, I wouldn't have gotten to hear all of the great stories from those in attendance who came up and took the podium to support my idea. It warmed my heart to hear those kind words that were said about Mr. T.

Bob Doty, manager of the Willits Mendo Mill, thank you for donating the nicest piece of plywood you had. With it, I made a 2 foot by 16 foot sign that reads, "Tom Tilton Gymnasium," which is now hanging in the gym.

Tom Summers, owner of the House Doctor paint store, thank you for generously donating two cans of paint. The colors you chose, the yellow and the green, proved to be a perfect match for what I needed.

Paul Riley, thank you for donating a can of stain for the sign. There is more to thank you for, though: You helped me determine where the best place to hang the sign would be and, when it was time to hang the sign, you were there to see it through. I appreciate you being "on call" for me during those final moments.

Thank you to the Willits Unified School District maintenance crew who helped me hang the sign in the gym. I couldn't have done it without you.

Maria de los Angeles Munguia, thank you for allowing time during the last week of school to hold the dedication during school hours. The last couple of months have been a race against the clock. My ultimate goal was to get the approval to name the gym before school let out for summer recess, because I knew it would mean something special for the students that were on his wrestling team. Thanks, Maria, for helping facilitate that last-minute assembly.

And finally.... Thank you, Mr. T, for being so inspirational. Your "never give up" philosophy inspired me to go after what I wanted. When I was knocked down, I got right back up and tried twice as hard. I had a vision; I made a plan; I kept at it; I never gave up; and in the end, I accomplished my goal, Mr. T style.

Thank you everyone for helping turn my vision into a reality.

Colleen Pappadakis, Willits

Marijuana museum

To the Editor:

On June 9, I attended a meeting at the Grange here in Willits regarding the economic impact the Caltrans bypass will have on our town. The panel did a good job with presenting a lot of statistics that may or may not have anything to do with what happens to Willits once the bypass is completed and traffic is routed around town instead of through it.

A few folks at the meeting pondered how to put paint and lipstick on our old traditional attractions, the rodeo, the Skunk Train, and the logging/railroad history, but does anybody really think these alone can pull in the needed

Read the rest of Letters | Over on Page 11

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Community News

Heartwarming stories & local tidbits



Hometown Celebration

'Celebrate Our Independents' next Thursday at downtown event

The 6th Annual Hometown Celebration next Thursday, June 27, is the kick-off of Willits' 125th anniversary celebration and celebrates Willits Frontier Days week, too.

Chamber of Commerce Director Lynn Kennelly says she's expecting a busy evening – from 5 to 9 pm – with plenty of performers, vendors, business specials and fun for all.

This year's Hometown Celebration theme is "Celebrate Our Independents": "This street party celebrates the uniqueness of our independently owned businesses," Kennelly said.

The purpose of the hometown celebrations is not just to draw community members downtown for special celebrations, Kennelly said, but to encourage shopping locally all the time.

Downtown businesses and restaurants stay open late, offering deals, goodies and special activities. Other businesses display their goods or services – along with games, prizes and free samples – at booths. The new U.S. Cellular store at the Evergreen Shopping Center will be providing "instant" printouts of photos for all.

If you haven't bought your Frontier Days tickets yet, you are likely to be able to catch the eye of a roving Sweetheart contestant.

Live music of different genres will be provided by Redbud, Farmers Market Band, New Blu Trio, and Lincoln Andrews' E.T. Jazz group, along with performances from Kathleen Ferri-Taylor's young dance students at Cloud 9 studio and the Willits Drum Circle.

Food vendors include Mendough's Wood-Fired Pizza and Midnight Moon,

The rest of Shortfall | From Page 1

Above top: an acrobat spreads her arms into the afternoon sun; middle: Cheryl Jordan of Arabella Soaps displays one of her jars of body butter; at right: Kiera Dragness, Katelyn Garman and Ella Garman smile for the camera



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Pine Mountain - 20 gorgeous acres with towering redwoods. Custom 3 bdrm/2 bh home and cozy western style cabin. Large shop. Exc. well, water supply, power, phone. All of this on 15 acres.....**\$375,000**

Dos Rios - Former resort next to Eel River. Beautiful 3 bdrm home, caretaker residence, many cabins, gardens, orchard, mini golf course. Excellent water supply, power, phone. All of this on 15 acres.....**\$375,000**

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committee sought. "I think we should have some support for EDFC in our budget," she said.

The motion passed on votes from Strong, Orenstein and Madrigal.

"The money is going to come from out of nowhere again?" asked Stranske, who voted against EDFC funding.

Burton also voted against providing the EDFC money. "Maybe we should call Visa

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Clockwise from top left: Shawna Handschug and Erika Rowland of Healing Central Chiropractic; a sweet girl shows off her new face painting; the J.D. Redhouse Cowboy shows off sale info for last year's event; attendees wait in line to spin the prize wheel; Simone River dances with the West African Dance group; Adam Sullivan of the Dirt Floor Band sings during last year's festival

Photos by Maureen Moore of PhotoGraphress.com

sponsored by: The Willits Chamber of Commerce/ Local First, Baechtel Creek Inn & Spa, the City of Willits, Les Schwab Tire Center, Lisa Epstein-State Farm Insurance, NCO Community Action, Noyo Theater, Sherwood Rancheria Casino, KOZT-FM, The Willits News and Willits Weekly.

and see if they cancelled our credit card," he quipped.

Willits Realtor Tom Woodhouse told the council he wished there was a quick answer to fixing Willits' budget problems.

"It is really hard to communicate with this council about a lot of things," Woodhouse said. "Part of our problem is we have to admit we have a divisive council at this point."

NOYO THEATRE Willits, CA
Times for 6:21 - 6:27

WORLD WAR Z
(PG-13)
Runs: 1 hr. 55 min

Daily (2D): 3:30, 6:00
Sat/Sun (2D): 1:00, 3:30, 6:00
Daily (3D): 8:15
Sat/Sun (3D): 9:00

MONSTERS UNIVERSITY
(G)
Runs: 1 hr. 50 min

Daily (3D): 3:15, 5:45
Sat/Sun (3D):
11am, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30
Daily (2D): 8:45pm

MAN OF STEEL
(PG-13)
Runs: 2 hr. 23 min

Daily: 2:30, 5:30, 8:30
Sat/Sun:
11:30, 2:30, 5:30, 8:30

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Any second week 2D film
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Community News

Heartwarming stories & local tidbits

COLUMN | Relationships



Appreciating Each Other

When we fall in love, we constantly send verbal and nonverbal signals out, showing how much we appreciate and adore the person with whom we have fallen in love and how excited we are to be with that person. We are drawn to one another, and it feels as though we cannot spend enough time with each other. It is even painful to be separated. I am sure you know what I am talking about.

Doris Wier
Columnist

The intensity of those feelings changes, naturally, when the honeymoon phase of a relationship is over. When we are in a long-term relationship, and/or when we become parents, we may not express our appreciation for our partners enough. We usually are so busy with our everyday lives, we simply forget to show appreciation for one another, and we start taking each other for granted.

Even if this is just perceived, it can hurt a relationship. Expressing appreciation for each other usually does not flow as easily and naturally as it does in the beginning of our relationships. However, our partners, ourselves, and our relationships always need some nurturing and attention. At this stage of a partnership, for many of us, appreciating each other has to become a conscientious act, which later can turn into a new habit.

Referring to the garden analogy from my first column, expressing appreciation and admiration for one another is a wonderful and important fertilizer for any relationship. It is a real relationship booster. Being appreciated makes us feel special and noticed by our partner.

This promotes our willingness to continue to contribute to our relationship and the projects we have together; it also deepens our connection, creating a strong feeling of togetherness and strengthening our relationship. This is what we need when we are facing moments of stress and conflict, which are part of life and part of being in relationship.

What I see in my work with couples, and it is scientifically supported as well, is that couples who have a high level of appreciation and admiration for each other, usually handle conflict with more ease. Their conflicts do not escalate as much and, as a couple, they recover faster from any conflicts. They feel genuinely happy in their marriage or partnership.

You might consider creating a daily habit or ritual of appreciating each other. The appreciation can be about something small like, "Thank you for making me a cup of coffee this morning," or something big like, "Thank you for supporting me all these years, even through my career change. I could not have done it without you."

You know much better than I do what your partner needs to hear or feel. But one last tip: It is often the little things that have the biggest effect. Have fun and be creative. Until next month...

Doris Wier is a certified life and relationship system coach who works and lives in Willits. She specializes in conflict resolution. She coaches individuals, couples and teachers, and offers Explore-Shops for couples. Info: www.embraceconflicts.com.



FREE SPORTS PHYSICALS

Howard Memorial Hospital

is offering FREE sports physical exams to children of all ages enrolling in a sports program.

Food and Fun!

Chef Kyle will provide healthy snacks and recipes and there will be fun giveaways.

June 29

July 27

August 24

9:00 AM - Noon

11 OAKS CONFERENCE ROOM
1040 S. MAIN STREET

Please RSVP to schedule an appointment

CALL 707.456.3127
Or email Kristen.McCallum@ah.org

Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital
Adventist Health

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The rest of Willy | From Page 1

\$1,800 to \$2,800.

One mold was created with several interchangeable parts, allowing the business to make cowboys, spacemen, Indians, Paul Bunyans and more. The company also created a Uniroyal Gal (which looks remarkably like Jackie O), as well as several species of animals including horses, steer, cows and giant chickens.

The Willits Frontier Days grounds received its Muffler Man, appropriately, from Lee Persico in 1967.

Persico was working in the oil business – gas stations were the original target market for the statues – and heard that a damaged statue would be up for sale, from a Phillips 66 service station in Northern California that was changing its marketing plans. Persico was able to purchase the statue for \$50.

The statue was picked up and delivered to Jack Tharp's shop, where Tharp and Persico spent the winter restoring the broken shoulders and arms, straightening out the pants, and creating Cowboy Willy's signature cowboy hat, branding iron and belt buckle.

Some vandalism occurred over the years, requiring Willy to be restored and repaired, but this year a major effort was undertaken to give him a complete overhaul, literally from the ground up.

Mike and Angie Miller are serving their first and second years on the Willits Frontier Days board, and they felt, after the success of the Soda Saloon overhaul in 2012, that they were ready for a bigger project for 2013.

Last fall, it was decided the pair would take on the task of painting Willy, something that many volunteers had done in the past, most notably Danny McBride, who headed up the painting project for the last several years.

This year, the Millers nominated friend Randy Spears, a 33-year veteran of the auto body painting and repair industry, to help them give Willy a new lease on life.



Above: Randy and Mike move Willy's hat
Below: Randy paints white primer, creating "Ghost Willy"

Photos by Angie Miller



varieties of facial hair, including a mustache, goatee and mutton chops.

Repairs were needed to Willy's chest, where large cracks were forming, and to his arms, which were ripped off and frantically repaired several years ago, just days before the Fourth of July celebration.

Once repaired and sanded, Willy received a coat of white primer paint, which led the Millers and Willits Frontier Days volunteers on site to dub him "Ghost Willy." He then received a healthy tan, and finally his blue pants and a new two-tone gray shirt.

The number of hand-painted details that Spears has added this year has made Cowboy Willy possibly the most spectacular he's ever been: a newly painted hat, cleaned belt buckle, new galvanized branding iron, golden rivets and seam, pocket and belt loop stitching, a "Willy" instead of "Wrangler" patch on his jeans, and streaks of grey in his eyebrows and Brunette hair, "because he's finally getting older now." The restoration process also included a debate about whether Willy's sleeves end in cuffs or are simply rolled-up long sleeves. Spears wanted to make sure the accuracy was top-notch during the redo.

The garden at Willy's feet also received an overhaul. Brambles, poison oak, berry bushes and more had taken over the area where he stands, covering his boots up to his knees. The vegetation has now been removed, containers have been planted with flowers, a new fence is being constructed out wood poles, and a wishing well has also been added.

The wishing well features an old hand-crank bucket and hand-painted rocks. The well will collect funds that, this year, will be donated to a trust fund for Willits Frontier Days member Tracy LeGris. The trust fund has been set up to assist with medical bills from LeGris' recent stay in the ICU.

Willits Frontier Days is asking anyone who has old photos of Willy through the years, especially any with facial hair, to send a copy to P.O. Box 800 in Willits, or to email copies to willitsfrontierdays@gmail.com.

Come see the wonderfully completed new Cowboy Willy statue starting this weekend at this year's first Frontier Days event: the horseshow on Sunday at 9 am.

Keep up to date on all Willits Frontier Day activities at www.WillitsFrontierDays.com.



Photos by Maureen Moore

Banking on Horseback

Laura McBride rides through the bank drive-through on horseback, to celebrate Willits Frontier Days

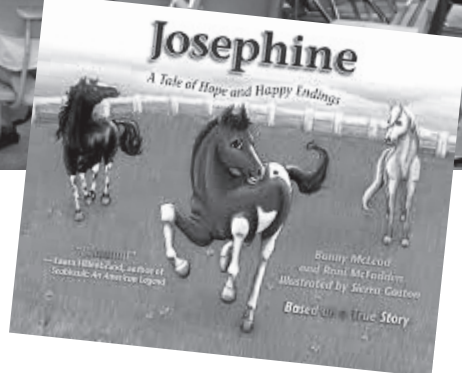
For 20-plus years, McBride has made her annual trek to the drive-through lane of the Savings Bank of Mendocino County (formerly, Bank of Willits) to make her deposit and unofficially kick off the Frontier Days celebration.

McBride was on her horse, Twinkie, and was ponying little ChaCha along.



Roni Reads

Local author, Roni McFadden read her story "Josephine" to a gathered crowd of excited students at the Willits Kids Club. "Josephine" tells the story of one of the famous racehorse Seabiscuit's descendants.



Willy watches over the grounds

Photo by Maureen Moore

Community News

Heartwarming stories & local tidbits



2013 Salutatorians | Siarra Bergmann & Jose "Chucho" Hernandez
2013 Valedictorian | Bonnie Smith

Congratulations to the Willits High School Class of 2013

86 graduates walked across Maize Field last Thursday during the annual commencement ceremony

Bottom left: Graduate Tasia Hooks stands with Principal Gordon Oslund after receiving her diploma; above left: the graduating class of 2013; above right: Jamie Louise Lech holds her diploma; bottom right: Siarra Bergmann high-fives fellow grads as she makes her way across the field

Photos by Maureen Moore of Mphotographress.com. See these and more at <http://photographress.zenfolio.com/wlshgrad2013>



Students of the Month - May 2013

Baechtel Grove Middle School

(Pictured at right)

From left to right: Principal Maria de los Angeles Munguia, Isabelle Gutierrez, Nicky Amador, Heidi Herold, Alex Cameron and Justin Amador



Willits High School

(Pictured at far right)

From left to right: Sylvia Friend, Hannah Friend, Melany Katz, Principal Gordon Oslund, Irene Labus, Katie Shuster, Alicia Mehtlan and Ashley Baldwin



Sober Grad a Success

Wow! Another Sober Grad Party has come and gone, and what a party it was! Kudos and high fives to the Class of 2013. You were respectful; you were appreciative; and you seemed to be having a lot of fun. One graduate expressed his appreciation by saying: "Thank you! This was one of the best experiences I've had. I had so much fun!" You were the only class in recent memory that did choreographed dances. You did lots of karaoke. And thanks to this wonderful community you got lots of good stuff.

There were many activities for the grads, which were all in use throughout the night: a Velcro wall, the Lions' Club casino, ping pong, air hockey, DJ Ken Steele, a movie room, a photographer, air tattoos and henna tattoos, and – new this year thanks to local artists Cynda Valle and Cat Emerson – beautiful sketch portraits of the grads.

There were tons of prizes ranging in value from

\$25 to \$250. And there were four \$1,000 Grand Prizes. The lucky winners were: Marissa Greene, Kelseigh Holder, Damian Rodriguez and Sean Kettering.

Thanks to all of you who participated in and supported our efforts throughout the year. We now have an awesome record of 27 years without a death on Graduation Night! Think how many lives have been saved.



Above: A graduate "hangs out" on the Velcro wall; below: the loot available to the grads made an impressive wall display at the Community Center; top right: attendees enjoy the event; at right: \$1,000 winners from left to right: Damian Rodriguez, Sean Kettering, Kelseigh Holder and Marissa Greene

Photos by Brië Venturi



m•pho•tog•ra•phress

[uh-tog-ruh-friss]

noun: Maureen Moore: a person who creates fabulous photo moments

Facebook 707-972-7047 maureengetsmail@gmail.com



What's Happening Around Town

Things to do, see and enjoy in and around Willits

Thursday, June 20

Willits Library Summer Reading Kick-Off Celebration: 10:30 to 11:30 am at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. This summer's "Reading is So Delicious" program includes many special activities for families, children, teens and adults, on Thursday mornings and other days. Today, participants will be using the "Play with Your Food" book to create art from fruits and veggies. Stop by the Library to pick up the schedule for all activities through August 15. Info: 459-5908.

"One Man, One Cow, One Planet": a film about biodynamic farming: "What does an environmentally friendly biodynamic food system - capable of feeding everyone - actually look like?" 7 pm at Little Lake Grange, 291 School St. Presented by Now & Then Films. Suggested donation: \$5 to \$10. Visit: <http://onemanonecow.com>.

Shanachie Pub: Solo coastal guitarist Steven Bates, 3rd Thursday of every month. 6 pm, no cover. "When playing acoustic Bates delivers a fast-paced strumming technique that has a rock and roll vibe unto itself." Visit www.myspace.com/stevenbatesmusician

Friday, June 21

"Soar": 27th annual Dance Recital by Cloud 9 Dance Studio, featuring the students of Kathleen Ferris-Taylor, Jenny Montes and Lillian Evind. 7 pm at Willits High School's Allen Garcia Memorial Auditorium. Tickets (at the door): \$8; students under 21 & seniors, \$5.

Saturday, June 22

"The Choice of a Lifetime: Returning From the Brink of Suicide": 2 to 4 pm, at the Willits Library. Taught by Sonya Nesch, author of "Advocating for Someone with a Mental Illness." The class format is a one-hour video of people with the illness talking about their experience, followed by a discussion and a useful handout of information and resources. Info: 937-3339.

Shanachie Pub: 6 pm, celebrate Jedidiah's birthday, jamming with friends. 9 pm, no cover: Hanging Chad, a "decades-spanning, crowd-pleasing true rock & roll band." plays "rock for everyone," from '60 favorites to current pop hits. Instant requests.



Willits Main Street Mile

Runners are invited to participate in this year's Willits Main Street Mile, a 1 mile race down Main Street right before the Independence Day Parade, with spectators lining the street.

The race starts at the crosswalk at Commercial and Main, at 10:35 am precisely. Racers will follow the parade route, turning east at the Post Office to head down Valley Street almost to the Agape Church, then turn around and retrace the route back to the crosswalk in front of Main Street Music.

You must be able to finish the mile in under 15 minutes, because the street is cleared at 10:50 am for the start of the parade.

Prizes will be awarded for overall male and female winners, plus medals will be given to the top five racers in six different age groups.

Entry fee for the race is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children 10 and under. Proceeds from the race are to benefit the Willits High School cross country team.

Registration available in advance by downloading entry form at www.willitsmile.com, or on the day of the race, from 8:30 to 10:20 am. Race bibs will be passed out at that time. Racers are advised to park at Willits High School and walk down to the start.

The top three male racers in 2012 were: Sebastian O'Bergin of Ukiah, age 20, coming in first at 4 minutes, 47 seconds; Paul Holden of Ukiah, age 16, 4 minutes, 48 seconds; and Kenny Smith of Willits, age 22, 4 minutes, 48 seconds. The top three female racers in 2012 were Holly Enzler of Ukiah, age 48, coming in first at 6 minutes, 12 seconds; Colleen Kamaroff of Willits, age 23, at 6 minutes, 15 seconds; and Elise Ford of Arcata, age 14, at 6 minutes, 18 seconds.

Other runners from Fort Bragg, Martinez, Cloverdale, Mountain View, Healdsburg, Livermore, Hayward, Potter Valley, San Jose, Oklahoma City, Berkeley and San Diego also joined the racers from Willits and Ukiah, for a total of 76 contestants.

Number 76 across the finish line was Eli Gibbons, a former All-American runner in college and member of the Willits High School Hall of Fame, shepherding his two kids, the youngest milers, Makana (age 2) and Makayla (age 4) Gibbons, across the finish line. Ronald Barrios of Willits, 72, was the oldest miler, running the race at 11 minutes, 27 seconds.

More info and registration forms at <http://www.willitsmile.com>. Questions? Contact Smith at 459-1731 or info@willitsmile.com.

Sunday, June 23

Little Lake Grange Pancake Breakfast: 8 to 11 am, 291 School Street; 4th Sunday of every month. \$6 for traditional plate (Hank's famous buttermilk pancakes, bacon, eggs made to order, real butter, juice, organic coffee or tea); \$7 for natural plate (multi-grain sourdough pancakes, organic maple syrup, farm-fresh local eggs, organic yogurt & fresh fruit in season, organic coffee or tea).

Fight'n for a Cure Fundraiser: Dinner at Loose Caboose, to raise funds for Relay for Life, hosted by the "City Girls" relay team, and served by the Hula Boys in costume (Jay Epstein, Tom Woodhouse, Alan Falleri, and Ron Moorehead). Featuring roasted pork with apricot pineapple sauce. \$25. Two seatings: 4:30 and 6:30 pm. Reservations required (by June 14): call 459-7910.

"Copenhagen": 2 pm at Willits Community Theatre. A staged reading at the Willits Community Theatre of Michael Frayn's highly acclaimed 1998 play, based on a meeting in Copenhagen in 1941 between two physicists, Werner Heisenberg and Neils Bohr. "Copenhagen" posits that this meeting might have been a reason for the "miraculous failure" of Germany to develop an atom bomb during World War II. The Willits reading is directed by Mitchell Robertson, with performances by Paul Lambert (Bohr), Damian Sebouhian (Heisenberg) and Mary Burns (Mrs. Bohr). \$5 at the door.

Willits Frontier Days Events

Willits Frontier Days Opening Day events: All at the Jack Sharp Arena at the Rodeo Grounds, 400 block of East Commercial Street. All free to attend.

Horse Show, 8 am

Sweetheart Judging, 10 am

Gymkhana, after the Horse Show.

Monday, June 24

Healthier Living: Managing Chronic Health Conditions: Free workshop (developed by Stanford University) empowers people to live well while dealing with conditions like diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, high blood pressure, lung disease, and other chronic health issues. At the Harrah Center. For caregivers and family



COLLUMN | On the Screen



Film Review:

"A Bird of the Air"

Parrot finds boy, boy finds girl with dog: so the adventure and love story begins.

"A Bird of the Air," an indie film directed by Margaret Whitton, adapted from the novel, "The Loop" by Joe Coomer and written for the screen by noted screenwriter Roger Towne ("The Natural"), is one of those movies that won't let you turn away once you start watching.

The story was originally optioned by Oprah and then acquired by Matthew McConaughey for himself, with Penelope Cruz in the female lead. Ultimately, Whitton chose unknown actors, and that choice truly maximizes "story over stars".

The cinematography by Oscar-winning Philippe Rousselot captures nuance after nuance, illuminating the characters with his artful lens. Our wounded hero, Lyman, is a handsome loner reminiscent of a young Harrison Ford, who works with the Courtesy Patrol on a wide stretch of interstate in rural New Mexico.

His life has only three components: working solo to help stranded motorists and remove roadkill, reading voraciously in his tiny trailer, and eating his main meal at the local diner where the motherly waitress understands that this is a man who prefers not to talk. He lives in the shadow of having been orphaned when he was 4 years old, losing both parents in a car accident.

The ironies continue, weaving together seamlessly when a lost parrot (a yellow-headed Amazon) flies into his trailer and refuses to leave. The bird appears to know only two sentences: "Shut up!" and "I'm an eagle!" Lyman can understand where the first sentence must have come from, but the mystery of the second

members, too. Every Monday for six weeks, starting today. 1501 Baechtel Road. 9:30 am to noon. Advance registration is required: call Susan Era, 707-671-5939, or Charlie Selzer, 707-972-3191.

Tuesday, June 25

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre. This week the Tightwad Tuesday movie is "Man of Steel." Tuesday showings: 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 pm. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6660.

Wednesday, June 26

"Queen of the Sun: What Are the Bees Telling Us?": 2 to 3:30 pm at the Willits Library. Taggart Siegel's revelatory documentary - "entertaining, gorgeous and relevant" - about the importance and beauty of bees. Visit www.queenofthesun.com.

Thursday, June 27

Kid's Event - Bee Demonstration: 10:30 to 11:30 am, at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Teacher Jini Reynolds will don her bee suit and bring an enclosed observation hive of live bees to teach all about these beautiful and essential creatures.

Teen's Event: 3 to 4 pm at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Meet Library Director, Mindy Kittay, and learn how to make some lip balm, made with honey and beeswax. Then create a container for your lip balm, crowned with some jazzy jewels.

Opening Day of Kids' Farmers Market at the Willits Library: produce, flowers, seedlings, eggs, and more from kids' gardens and homes. All grown, raised, and marketed at great prices by Mendocino County kids. Thursdays through August 15, in front of the Willits Library. Interested in being a seller at the market or an adult volunteer? Call and reserve a free spot to sell your home-grown items or get info on volunteering: Judith at 463-4153.

Shanachie Pub: Lincoln Andrews & Company Jazz Jam, 8 pm, every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month, featuring a variety of jazz musicians in a night of improvised genre-spanning jazz music.

Practice begins June 23 for the Willits High School varsity and junior varsity girls soccer players. Coach Saprina Rodriguez will be working with the girls through the summer until new varsity and junior varsity coaches are hired. Sundays and Tuesdays at the City Field: Sunday June 23 and June 30 at 4 pm, then through July and August at 6 pm. Tuesdays starting June 25 at 6 pm, also at the City Field.

"Don't forget to get your free sports physical on June 29 or July 27," Rodriguez said. Free sports physicals are available through Howard Memorial Hospital, 9 am to noon at 11 Oaks Conference Room, 1040 South Main Street. Please call or email to schedule in advance: 456-3127 or Kristen.mcCallum@ah.org.

Fall tryouts will take place the week of August 19 at the Willits High School field. More info: call Rodriguez at: 354-2539.

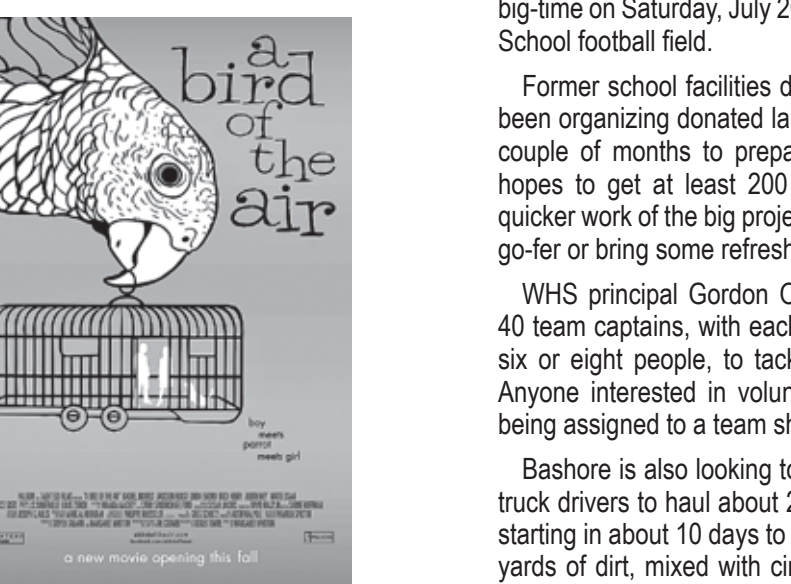
Soccer Camp
The Challenger Sports British Soccer Camp is coming to Willits this summer, offering soccer camp to Willits Youth Soccer players. Camp is scheduled for the week of July 29 through August 2 at Gordon Logan Park. Programs are offered for ages 3 to 4 (8 am to 9 am; \$80); ages 5 to 8 (9 am to 11 am; \$99); ages 9 to 12 (noon to 2 pm); and ages 13 to 17 (6 to 8 pm; \$99).

launches him on a quest to find the bird's owner.

While at the library to do research and check out more books, the young librarian - herself a peculiar combination of flamboyance and flightiness - is fascinated by the mysterious Lyman, and she determines to get to know him. Lyman wants his solitude, but soon Fiona and her basset hound are literally hounding Lyman when he's not working. In a wonderfully symbolic but not contrived way, the two animals start to break down Lyman's walls and to ground the ever-in-motion Fiona.

Their combined search for the parrot's owner leads them to a series of colorful characters played by actors Buck Henry, Judith Ivey, Phyllis Sommerville, Gary Farmer, and a rare appearance by noted French actress Anjanette Comer. Eventually, the search will reveal all manner of truths, but not without a near-deadly accident in which Lyman becomes the true hero.

In the literal sense of the word, Lyman finds his true voice, the bird finds his true owner (but with a twist), and both Lyman and Fiona find love in the words of that iconic Paul Williams song, "Love Comes From the Most Unexpected Places."



Willits Frontier Days Events

6th Annual Willits Hometown Celebration: 5 to 9 pm in downtown Willits. This year's theme is "Celebrate Our Independents"; kicking off Local businesses and downtown restaurants stay open late, offering

deals, goodies and special activities. Live music by Redbud, Farmers Market Band, New Blu Trio, and Lincoln Andrews & Company Jazz Jam, with a dance performance by Kathleen Ferris-Taylor's young students at Cloud 9 studio. Food vendors include: Mendough's Wood-Fired Pizza; Midnight Moon with specialty hotdogs, roasted almonds and hibiscus tea; and Rio's Fish & Chips serving Mexican corn and fruit cups. Crafts booths, business tables, the Willits Chamber of Commerce's prize wheel, and more. Info at the chamber: 459-7910.

Friday, June 28

Willits Community Drum Circle: 7 to 10 pm at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Every 2nd and 4th Fridays. Free. Everyone is welcome. Info: 459-4932.

4th Friday Fun Night: 6 pm, Willits Methodist Church, 286 School Street, across from the Grange. Fun, games, fellowship and food: "taco" theme potluck. Please bring a small amount of taco filling ingredients if you can. Raffle for door prizes (everybody gets a raffle ticket). Freewill donation; funds go to Willits Kids Club. Info: 459-0861.

Willits Frontier Days Events

Truck Pulls: 6 to 9 pm, \$13 adult; \$5 child. At the Jack Sharp Arena at the Rodeo Grounds, 400 block of East Commercial Street.

Street Dance: with Double Standyrd, Mendocino County blues and Southern rock band; after the Truck Pulls. At the Rodeo Grounds, 400 block of East Commercial Street. Free to attend.

Saturday, June 29

Willits Frontier Days Events

Willits Frontier Days Carnival: Opens at 4 pm, Rodeo Grounds; continues through the evening of July 4. Pre-sale

"This is a very talented group of soccer professionals who can teach our kids some great soccer techniques, Coach Rodriguez said. "This is the first time since Ziemer Brothers Camp was here about five years ago that we've had a professional soccer camp here." Those interested can call Rodriguez at 354-2539 for more info, or Jamie Kent in Sacramento at 916-265-2498, or register online at www.challengersports.com. Those interested in hosting a British soccer coach (for \$80) can call Kent in Sacramento for more info.

Willits Youth Soccer

Registration for Willits Youth Soccer is going on now through July 31, for boys and girls ages 3 to 15. Registration is \$45 per player. Stop by Ace Copy, 889 South Main Street in the Safeway plaza, to register or call 354-2539. "We start practicing the second week of August," Rodriguez said.



At left: Organizer Wayne Bashore, left, with volunteers Kris and Tim at Saturday's work day at the WHS football field. At right: Volunteers at Saturday's work day at the WHS football field. Left to right, in front: Matthew, Datzman, Eric, Marcos, Sebastian and Aaron. Left to right, in back: Matt Moratti, Mr. Colvig and Nick.

made to the high jump, pole vault and long jump. Anyone interested in volunteering to haul some dirt should call Bashore at 489-0546.

Last weekend, Oslund and volunteers Jim Schulz, Dave O'Leary and Kirk Orvis did a first round of "ripping and rotovating" the field, tearing up the grass and turning over the soil to dry it out before removing. Bashore and volunteers plan to do another round of rotovating this Friday.

A group of student volunteers along with assistant football coach Matt Moratti and teacher Mr. Colvig, dug up 61 in-field sprinklers Saturday before the tractors and grader started their work. New sprinklers will be installed.

"This is a great project, with much-needed improvements to our field," Oslund said Saturday. "It's going to take a tremendous community effort on July 20. Come on out to work hard and to celebrate these improvements." he said.

Again, anyone interested in signing up to help should call Oslund at 354-3101 or Bashore at 489-0546.

tickets available only at Lo Bucks; \$20 for a one-day wristband, good for unlimited rides that day only; normally \$25.

Sunday, June 30

Zen Music with Shakuhachi: A concert with master flutists John Singer and Kurahashi Yodo, performing rare, historical Buddhist solo and duet shakuhachi pieces on the Japanese bamboo flute. One show only: 2 pm today. \$15. Willits Community Theatre, 37 W. Van Lane. Tickets available at the Goods' Shoppe, online at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/382007 or by calling 459-0895 to reserve tickets by credit card. Visit John Singer: <http://www.zenflute.com/> and Kurahashi Yodo: <http://www.mujuan.us/>.

Willits Frontier Days Events

Lions Cowboy Breakfast: 7 to 11 am at the Rec Grove. \$8 adults; \$5 children.

Cutest Little Cowboy & Cowgirl Contest: 10 am at the Rodeo Grounds. Free to attend.

National Anthem Contest: noon at the Rodeo Grounds. Free to attend.

Junior Rodeo: 4 pm at the Jack Sharp Arena at the Rodeo Grounds. \$5 adults; free for children.

Save the Date:

"If Not Now, When?" health presentation, July 2, Redwood Meadows Grace Community Church Old-Fashioned July 4th Celebration, free

Willits Frontier Days Events

Firefighters' Water Fight, July 3; Humboldt and Commercial streets; free.

CCPRA Professional Rodeo, July 3 and 4; Jack Sharp Arena; \$15 box tickets, \$12 adults; \$5 children.

Willits Frontier Days Western Dance, with Chad Bushnell, up and coming country music singer from Red Bluff, and Nashville Recording Artist McKenna Faith; July 3, Rodeo Grounds; Free.

Horseshoe Contest, July 4, Rec Grove.

Barbecue, July 4, Rec Grove; \$15 adult, \$8 child/senior

Black Bart Gunfighters, July 4; Rec Grove; free.

Willits Main Street Mile race, July 4, before the parade

Independence Day Parade down Main Street, July 4, starts at 11 am

Ongoing Events:

Farmers Market at City Park: Every Thursday from 3 to 6 pm. Summer vegetables, including tomatoes, zucchini, and more from area farmers plus live music, garden starts, flowers, crafts, baked goods, dinner and other edibles.



Willits City Pool Activities: Water Aerobics classes (\$6; \$5 for seniors; 20-class pass for \$100) at 11 am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and at 6:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Swim hours: Lap Swim: 6 to 8 am, Monday through Friday; Open Swim: noon to 4 pm, Monday through Saturday; Family Swim, 7 to 8 pm, extended to 9 pm if more than 12 people, Monday through Friday. All swimming is \$4/person, with a 20-swim card for \$70. Half-hour swimming lessons (two weeks of lessons) are offered Monday through Thursday, from 8 to 11 am and 4 to 6 pm. Call ahead to sign up for lessons: \$50 for first child (two weeks of lessons); \$45 for second child; \$40 for all remaining. Pool located at Willits High School, 299 North Main Street. Info: Shawna at 459-7125 (message phone) or 459-5778 (pool phone).

"Throwing the Bones": June exhibition at Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Recent paintings by artist-painter Peter Onstad. Gallery hours: Thursday and Friday, 4 to 7 pm; Saturday and Sunday from noon to 3 pm. Through June 30.

Open Mic at Shanachie Pub: Every Wednesday at 8:40 pm. Sign-ups start at 3 pm.

Puzzle Page

Activities & fun for kids of all ages

In the Stars...

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 20

This is a good time to overhaul your approach to fitness, Aries. If you have been thinking about scheduling a physical or getting a gym membership, do so this week.

TAURUS

Apr 21 - May 21

Taurus, you may have a difficult time taking sides when friends ask for your help in settling a dispute. Let your friends know you prefer to stay out of the squabble.

GEMINI

May 22 - Jun 21

Gemini, you are in need of some down time, so plan a weekend jaunt or a brief vacation to relax and recharge your batteries this week.

CANCER

Jun 22 - Jul 22

It would normally be quite an effort to pull the wool over your eyes, Cancer. However, in the next few days you will be so distracted with other things that fooling you is possible.

LEO

Jul 23 - Aug 23

Leo, take a few days to act foolish, throw caution to the wind and have a good time. If you don't, there may not be another such opportunity anytime soon.

VIRGO

Aug 24 - Sept 22

Virgo, the only way to get through a bumpy week is to keep your head down and your focus intense. Concentrate on the tasks at hand, and the week will be over before you know it.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 23

Libra, sometimes practicality gets in the way of your imagination. Though this can sometimes be stifling, you have to find a balance between whimsy and reality.

SCORPIO

Oct 24 - Nov 22

No one can put your plan into action better than you, Scorpio. Stop making excuses and really get started this week. Don't expect immediate results.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23 - Dec 21

Sagittarius, you may not feel that something you did is funny, but others are bowled over with laughter. Play along so you don't come across as a spoil sport.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 20

Expect your schedule to become quite hectic in the next few days, Capricorn. You may want to tie up any loose ends now and use any free time to rest.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21 - Feb 18

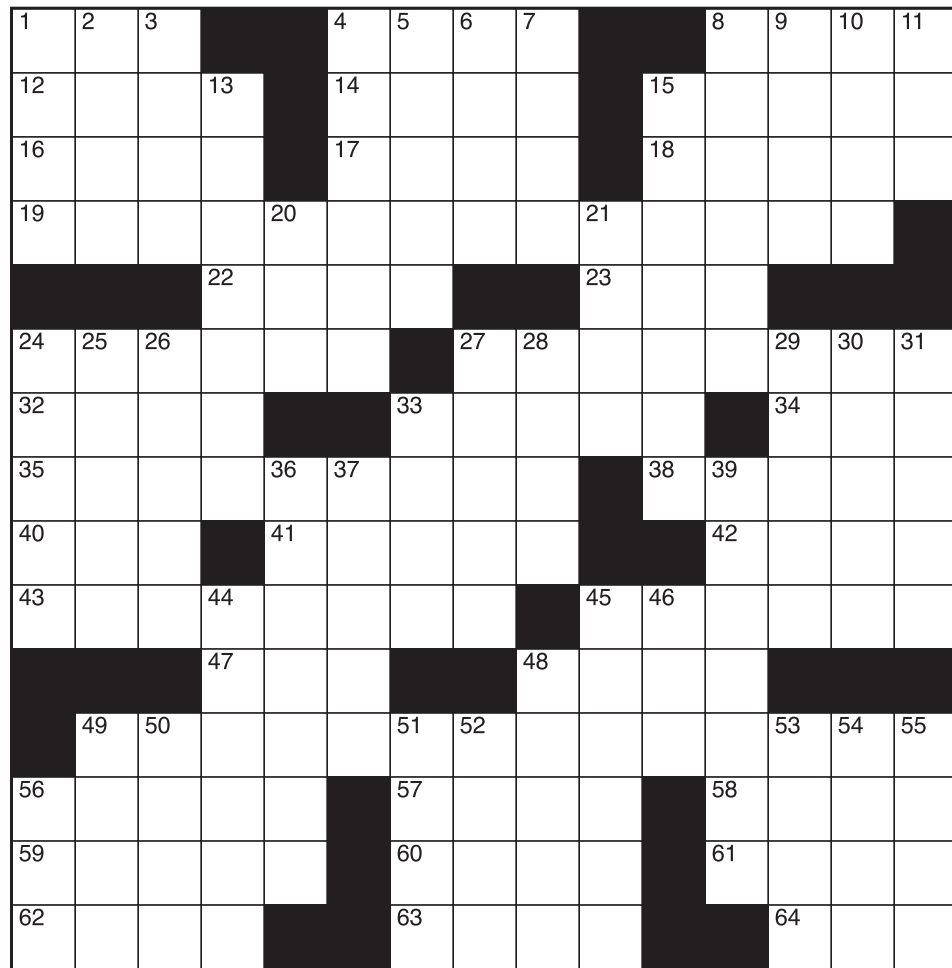
Aquarius, a burst of energy has you flying through all of those little projects that you have been putting off. Once you are done, you may have to create a new list.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

Pisces, though you feel like you have just been going through the motions, others are far more impressed than you think.

Crossword Puzzle



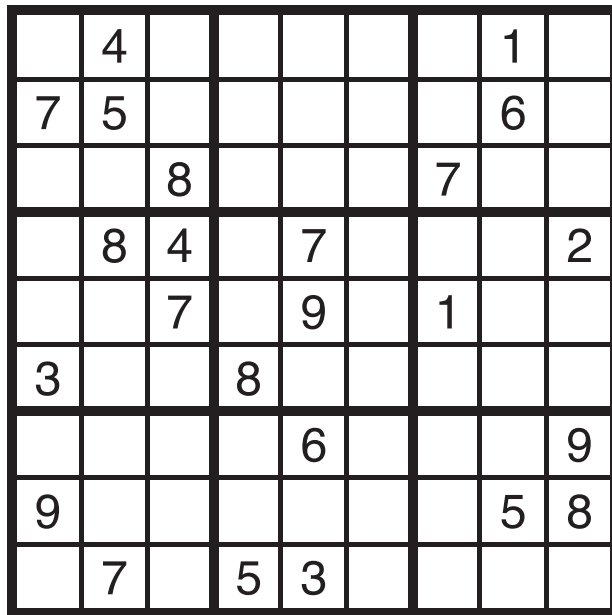
CLUES ACROSS

1. Dhab, Arabian capital
4. Invests in little enterprises
8. Stalk of a moss capsule
12. Beach material
14. Maneuver in a game
15. A castrated male chicken
16. Write bad checks
17. Sewer inhabitants
18. Farewell (Spanish)
19. Player makes 3 goals in one game
22. Greek rainbow goddess
23. Tax collector
24. Make unhappy
27. Hygienic
32. Double-reed instrument
33. Beetle Bailey's dog
34. Fee, ___, foe, fum
35. One dish meal
38. Goatlike antelope
40. Consumed food
41. Peels
42. Emerald Isle
43. Duties helpful to others
45. Fragments of cloth
47. Frozen water

CLUES DOWN

1. Requests
2. Spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan
3. Up to the time of
4. Common ankle injury
5. Tedium
6. 9th Greek letter
7. Abnormal closed body sac
8. One who obtains pleasure from other's pain
9. Long narrative heroic poem
10. Possessed by force
11. Autonomic nervous system
13. Treats with contempt
15. Bears
20. Before
21. Light ringing sound
24. Blends of soul and calypso
25. Fall off in intensity
26. Gives medicine
27. Gross receipts
28. Square measures
29. Ablaze
30. Incapable of flexibility
31. Bears, sheep or goats
33. An open skin infection
36. Effeminate
37. Competed in a speed test
39. Supplies with air
44. Short stays
45. Sown a lawn
46. 60 min. units (abbr.)
48. Second largest Oklahoma city
49. Fence picket
50. 2nd largest Algerian port city
51. Camel or goat fabrics
52. 19th Hebrew letter
53. Frosts
54. 17th state
55. Inquisitorial
56. Manuscripts (abbr.)

Sudoku



Level: Intermediate

ANSWERS ON PAGE 11

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!



Above: Honored HMH employees; at right: CEO Rick Bockmann and Tedd Dawson

Howard Memorial Hospital annual Service Awards

Employees and volunteers of Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital were honored last week at the annual Service Awards and Strawberry Feed on the back lawn of the hospital. Dr. Tedd Dawson was announced as the 2013 Physician of the Year, and Saundra Barrera was awarded the first annual Jann Lamprich volunteer service award.

The Tuesday, June 11 celebration recognized 46 employees, with a combined total of about 640 years of service and dedication to the hospital. Seventeen volunteers, with a combined total of about 36,900 hours were honored for their commitment to HMH and to the Willits community.



Left: Becky Hope, Jann Lamprich, Saundra Barrera and CEO Rick Bockmann pose for the camera. Photos courtesy of HMH

"HMH is made up of a team of individuals that are extremely dedicated and loyal," hospital CEO Rick Bockmann said. "Our community is truly blessed."

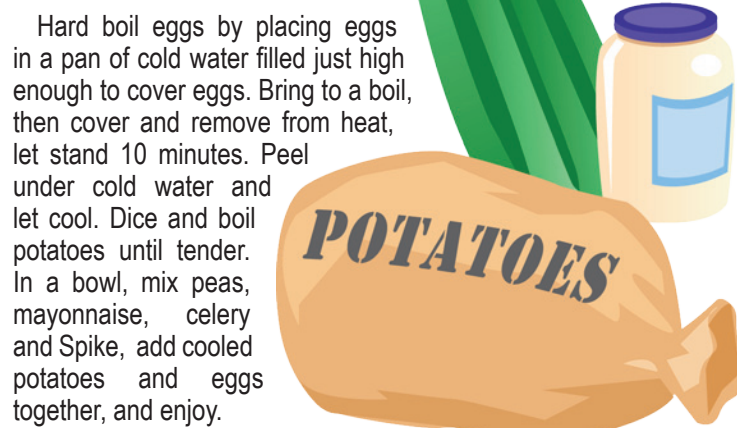
Employees who have worked for Adventist Health for five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 35 and 40 years were called to the front to accept an HMH service award pin and bonus check. The new volunteer service award has been started in honor of Lamprich's 60-plus years of service to HMH and to the Howard Foundation, and will be given annually to an auxiliary volunteer who demonstrates exemplary service to the hospital. The volunteer will be awarded a pin, and a plaque including his or her name will be mounted on the wall of the hospital.

Howard Memorial Hospital opened its doors in Willits 85 years ago, on May 20, 1927. To see more pictures of the celebration, visit the HMH Facebook page: www.facebook.com/hmhwillits

Dad's Potato Salad

- 2 1/2 pounds red potatoes
- 6 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups frozen green peas
- 1/2 jar mayonnaise
- 1 stock of celery, chopped
- 1 tsp to 1 tbs Spike seasoning - or to taste

Recipe by Christopher Moore



Hard boil eggs by placing eggs in a pan of cold water filled just high enough to cover eggs. Bring to a boil, then cover and remove from heat, let stand 10 minutes. Peel under cold water and let cool. Dice and boil potatoes until tender. In a bowl, mix peas, mayonnaise, celery and Spike, add cooled potatoes and eggs together, and enjoy.

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FIRST DAY OF SUMMER - FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Classifieds & More

The rest of Handouts | From Page 1

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Eckankar

Join us for a Community HU Song Tuesday, June 25, at 6 pm at the Willits Library meeting room, 390 E. Commercial Street. HU is a simple, uplifting prayer or mantra and can help you experience divine love and find inner peace. Families and all faiths are welcome. Sponsored by Eckankar: Experience the Light & Sound of God. Information? Please call 972-2475.

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Two 12,000 BTU Window Air Conditioners, like new. \$75 each. 707-354-2336.

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Peaches/Nectarines/Pears - 24lb box \$23
Tomatoes - 23lb box \$N/A
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Potter&Redwood Valley: Deanna/391-7336
Laytonville: Heather/984-7430, Lakeport: Linda/279-8840, Ft. Bragg: Karen/937-4664, Covelo&Brooktrails: Linda/459-6698

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Pinball Machines

PINBALL MACHINES for sale. 459-6372.

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Table Grape Plants, locally grown, delicious, and suited to our climate. Over 25 varieties, \$10 each. Also Tree Collard Plants, fantastic perennial greens for our region, \$5 each. Richard, 459-5926

Roommate Wanted

Brooktrails home, has veg/flower gardens, near creek and walking path. Prefer working female, n/s, no alcohol, small dog okay, own bathroom, Buddhist would be sweet, someone respectful. \$350. 459-1775.

RV/Trailer Space for Rent

Space rent starts at \$390 per month and includes water & garbage. Central location near Safeway in downtown Willits. Contact Manager in space #9 or call Dan (707) 462-7383.

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Volunteers Needed

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Eckankar

HAVE YOU HAD a spiritual experience? You are invited to participate in an ongoing, spiritual discussion Tuesday, June 25, at 6:30 pm at the Willits Library meeting room, 390 E. Commercial Street. Sponsored by Eckankar: Experience the Light & Sound of God. Information? Please call 972-2475.

TELL OUR ADVERTISERS YOU SAW IT IN WILLIT'S WEEKLY!

rude and at worst criminal." Drugs, alcohol, and mental health issues are a problem for many homeless people. "Mental health is a disaster in this county," Gonzalez said, "What we do is triage, and then they are back on the street."

"One main point we want to make," Moorhead said, "If you give a dollar or five dollars, it isn't really changing their lives or their livelihood. They party; it's gone."

"There are other options for helping," Gonzalez said. "By giving to the Food Bank and Daily Bread, they can make it go further."

"Our strongest message is to donate to the social services or to churches," Moorhead said.

Response from the business community is 95 percent very positive, Moorhead added. He explained how the program enables the chamber, WPD and county social services to partner and dialog with the business community, especially those in shopping centers like Safeway and Lo Bucks, where large groups of street people tend to gather. "Safeway's new manager, Clint, has been extremely responsive," Moorhead said "and is encouraging customers to let them know if there is an issue; then they can call the police."

"Kudos to our department [WPD]," Moorhead added, "The officers are extremely polite. When I do ride-alongs, I'm amazed at their patience."

The "Handouts Are Not Helping" program is ongoing; posters are available from WPD and Willits Chamber of Commerce.

"We tried to hit everybody," said Moorhead, "if you want one, you can get one."

Local services for those in need

Jim Marill, executive director of Willits Community Services and Food Bank, said WCS can sometimes help with short-term emergency housing, but it is usually reserved for households with minors. Single adults with housing needs are referred to the Buddy Eller Shelter in Ukiah (462-6290).

Marill said WCS can help provide transportation to the shelter (usually public transportation). He added WCS sometimes gets seasonal donations of blankets and sleeping bags it can give out.

Regarding persons dealing with mental health issues, Marill said that unless a person has documentation of "severe mental health issues, resources are limited and few and far between."

Those dealing with substance abuse issues are referred to the Ford Street Project (462-1934).

Willits Community Services and Food Bank 229 E. San Francisco Ave. 707-459-3333 Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 12-5 p.m. Food Distribution: Wednesday, Friday, 1-4:30 p.m.	Mendocino County Mental Health Services Emergency Crisis: 1-800-555-5906 Willits Office: 707-456-3850
Willits Daily Bread 58 Bush St. Monday-Thursday, 5-6 p.m. 707-459-3947	Manzanita Services Inc. Willits Resource Center 286 School St. Peer support wellness and recovery resource center serving those living with mental health challenges M-F, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Willits Brown Bag Lunch Program Willits City Park (Bud Snider Park) Saturday, 1-2 p.m. (or earlier if lunches go fast)	Little Lake Health Center 45 Hazel St. 707-456-9600

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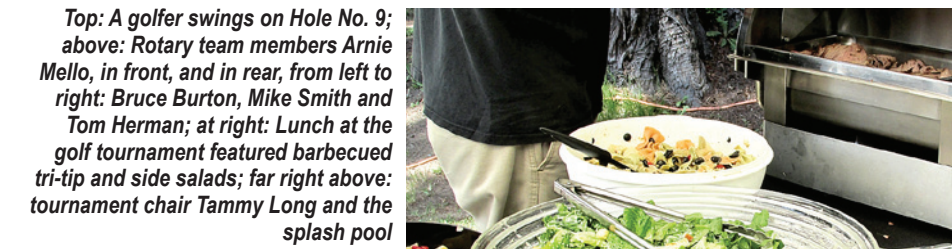
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Photos by Jennifer Poole

2013 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

WILLITS FRONTIER DAYS

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

HORSE SHOW
6/23 | 8 a.m. | Jack Tharp Arena | Free to Attend

SWEETHEART JUDGING
6/23 | 10 a.m. | Jack Tharp Arena | Free to Attend

GYMKHANA
6/23 | Following Horse Show | Jack Tharp Arena | Free to Attend

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

HOMETOWN CELEBRATION
6/27 | 5 to 9 p.m. | Main Street - Downtown Willits | Free to Attend

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

TRUCK PULLS
6/28 | 6 - 9 p.m. | Jack Tharp Arena | Adult: \$13, Child: \$5

STREET DANCE
6/28 | Following Truck Pulls | Rodeo Grounds | Free to Attend

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

CARNIVAL
6/29 | Opens at 4 p.m. | Rodeo Grounds

SUNDAY, JUNE 30

LIONS COWBOY BREAKFAST
6/30 | 7 - 11 a.m. | Rec Grove Park | Adult: \$8, Child: \$5

CUTEST LITTLE COWBOY & COWGIRL
6/30 | 10 a.m. | Rodeo Grounds | Free to Attend

NATIONAL ANTHEM CONTEST
6/30 | Noon | Rodeo Grounds | Free to Attend

JUNIOR RODEO
6/30 | 4 p.m. | Jack Tharp Arena | Adult: \$5, Child: Free

SWEETHEART CROWNED

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3

WATER FIGHT
7/3 | 5:30 p.m. | Humboldt & Commercial Streets | Free to Attend

CCPRA PROFESSIONAL RODEO
7/3 | 7 p.m. | Jack Tharp Arena | Box: \$15, Adult: \$12, Child: \$5
Local Team Roping | Following CCPRA rodeo

WESTERN DANCE
Dance: 7/3 | Following Rodeo | Rodeo Grounds | Free to Attend

THURSDAY, JULY 4

HORSESHOE CONTEST
7/4 | 9 a.m. | Rec Grove Park

PARADE
7/4 | 11 a.m. | Main Street - Downtown Willits | Free to Attend

BARBECUE
7/4 | Noon | Rec Grove Park
Adult: \$15, Child/Senior: \$8, Family Pack(2 Adults & 2 Children): \$40

BLACK BART GUNFIGHTERS
7/4 | 3 p.m. | Rec Grove Park | Free to Attend

CCPRA PROFESSIONAL RODEO
7/4 | 4 p.m. | Jack Tharp Arena | Box: \$15, Adult: \$12, Child: \$5
Local Team Roping | Following CCPRA rodeos

FOR



Rotary golf tournament raises \$9,200 for hospice

It was a beautiful day at the 15th annual Phoenix Hospice Golf Tournament on Sunday, June 9, especially after the 109 degree scorcher the day before. The tournament at the

"Kohls Cares" program, which encourages employees to do community service.

Howard Memorial Hospital and Willits Furniture had tables out on the course, offering refreshment to the golfers. State Farm Insurance ran the splash pool, and the new U.S. Cellular store in Willits brought along a tablet and printer to take team pictures of all the teams.

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
jennifer@willitsweekly.com

Brooktrails Golf Course, hosted by the Willits Rotary Club, had a great turnout of golfers, enjoying the shade under the 2,000 redwoods that line the course.

A preliminary count shows at least \$9,200 was raised to benefit the hospice.

Thirty-six players went around the 9-hole course twice, playing a scramble, with each starting at a different hole at 9 am. Hole #9 has a \$10,000 prize for anyone who makes a hole in one from the red tee. Nobody made a hole in one, but judging from the comments heard from around the course, there were some "good shots!" made that day.

Golfers enjoyed a tri-tip lunch with Caesar and pasta salad sides, catered by Si's Grill. A silent auction raised more funds for the hospice as did a splash pool, with six balls for \$5, at which golfers tried to hit a ball out of a wading pool, usually getting themselves wet in the process.

The tournament had 60 "hole sponsors" this year, too: local businesses and individuals who also donated money. The Kohls store in Ukiah contributed \$500 as well as volunteers: Five employees of Kohls came to help out - distributing donuts for one arduous task - as part of the

"The idea of a Rotary golf tournament to benefit hospice originated in Fort Bragg," said Gary Roussan, who was chair of the Willits tournament for 10 years. "That inspired Willits to do it, too."

Tammy Long, community liaison with Adventist Health Home Care and the Phoenix Hospice, and also a member of Rotary, headed up the benefit event this year.

"It was a such a pleasure working with my fellow Rotarians to benefit Phoenix Hospice," Long said. "This is an event that benefits everyone in our community. All of the money we earn goes directly back to providing care to those who need it, to benefit our families. That's why these fundraisers are so important: the hospice's work is crucial to our community."

Brooktrails golf pro Ron Runberg had personal reasons to support the Phoenix Hospice, he said, as hospice had helped care for his father. "It's such an incredible organization," he said, "you can't argue with the cause." Runberg said 45 out of the 50 tournaments held at the Brooktrails Golf Course each year were fundraisers of one kind or another. "I don't know of a better fundraising opportunity," he said.

Phoenix Hospice provides end of life care and services, and support for families in the Willits area. For more information, call the hospice at: 459-1818.

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revenue that will be lost once the bypass is in operation? That said, I want to finally address the elephant in the room, because I believe it is something that could actually make Willits an intriguing, interesting and important destination on many travelers' agendas. And, dare we dream, a lucrative one as well for our town. Marijuana.

Imagine this: as an annex to our already established county museum, a well-planned, well-put together and thoughtful "History of Marijuana" in the Mendocino County Museum. As many of us are aware, today's huge marijuana industry was practically invented right here in Mendocino County (with our neighbors to the north, Humboldt and Trinity counties) in the 1960s. If the town of Willits started working on this museum project right now, by the time marijuana becomes legal in California (a year? two years? five?), we will have opened the country's first official marijuana museum. The possibilities are endless.

"Willits - The Gateway to Bud Land" (just a thought). As Bill Maher stated recently in an article in Rolling Stone magazine: "If 40 years of abject failure of the War on Drugs has taught us anything, it's that the customer base [for pot] is large, strong and loyal. So, as in everything, money talks. And money is there to be made. There's no going back."

A well-written and detailed history of growing marijuana in the county, with input from some of the first growers here, could start things off. A history from local law enforcement on how it has handled this illegal agricultural phenomenon through the years would be fascinating. On display would be early growing, harvesting and trimming implements, showing the development over the last 50 years of more and more sophisticated techniques and tools to move the product to market. Additionally, a portion of the museum could be dedicated to the growth of the alternative medicine movement locally and how medical marijuana has played a role in that.

"Oh noooooo," many will say, "it will bring even more hippies to town with their dogs and friends and families in tow. And they beg for money, not spend it." OK, obviously, a savvy marketing study will need to be done to see just who and how many visitors will be diverted into town to this groundbreaking museum, but I would guess that at least half of the people (all ages) who pass through this region and have ever put a joint or pipe to their mouths would love to see a museum that represents an omnipresent and important cultural adjunct to their lifestyles.

"But marijuana is still illegal in Mendocino County except for, sorta kinda, medical marijuana, and we'll all get busted," you may say. I say, a creative, interesting and informative museum project could be put together without one bud of real marijuana on the premises. The museum would consist of photos, text, graphics and tools of the trade. What's illegal about that? By the time it does become legal, everything will be in place to expand the museum with a "tasting room" and a retail store.

"Oh, but who is going to pay to get this up and running?" you're asking. Having worked as a fund development director for 10 years for four non-profit organizations, I know that, done right with good research and development practices in place, the funding is out there. It could come from governmental sources such as the departments of Agriculture, Education, and Health and Human Services and/or from the thousands of private foundations that just might want to get in on the ground floor and fund the first marijuana museum in the United States. Not to mention private donations, venture capitalists and public/private collaborative funding. A capital campaign to raise funds and marketing should be started now!

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Puzzle Answers From Page 8

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

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

That's it. Time is of the essence. It's not going to take long for one (or more) of the dozens of small towns in the Emerald Triangle to come up with a similar idea. I hope folks really give this some serious thought. I think it could be a great revenue generator.

Kathleen Rippey, Willits

Left, right or center

Another bypass letter. Really, is there something new to add? We have all become pretty knowledgeable by now, the problem is that the "pros" talk to themselves, and the "cons" do the same. These last months have been important, in that the reality of the bypass is becoming clearer as information is being offered. I do think, however, that our town has settled into a hardening of opinions, either for or against the Caltrans bypass. Neither side is persuading or convincing the other to any great extent.

And here lies our problem and perhaps our solution. It is time to move forward. The only way we can come together is with a vision that is inclusive, one that gives at least the minimum to enough of us that we can agree to it in order to find our voice and maybe power as a community.

What vision? Let's start with Caltrans as a fact on the ground... They bought it, and they are working it. Let's also recognize that there are significant financial and environmental issues at stake. And finally, the town of Willits has legitimate claim to some benefits of a bypass.

I submit that the four-lane freeway viaduct design is based on a level of service definition that is arbitrary and self-serving. Bottom line, a two-lane highway, on the ground, engineered with a few proper off-ramps for us, gives Caltrans the work, with the proper recognition of our needs.

Of course, Caltrans will not respond to this idea; that's not the point. How do we respond to this idea? That's the point. We must begin to pull together now, if we think we want to create anything during and after the bypass and the relinquishment are done. A redesigned Main Street? A thematic approach to entice visitors to help our business? Cleaning streams and creating walking and biking paths?

Only if we start now by practicing inclusion, trusting that what includes most of us will work. It isn't always exciting and may not seem worth it. But consider, if every large issue could be moved forward slowly and with agreement, not satisfying any side, but including the core concerns of each side, perhaps politics could be given a rest.

In our case, everyone needs a little something. Caltrans gets to build it, regional traffic gets to use it; what about us? No, we have a right to want and advocate for a bypass that doesn't exclude us. Can we agree on a two-lane highway in the valley? Does this vision include enough of us? If so, then let's make it happen.

The first step is to talk about this idea. If it catches on, and there is a show of support, our next step is to rally our City Council to the idea. We can't go anywhere without our City Council's support and assistance. Sometimes we want our elected officials to lead. Sometimes, when we are united, we want them to facilitate what we want. Let's make that happen.

A resolution from our City Council that endorses a reasonable bypass that is cost-effective and recognizes our basic needs should be our first goal. Perhaps our Brooktrails Board of Directors and county Board of Supervisors would be influenced by a common purpose coming from Willits.

Questions of engineering problems, penalty fees to contractors, etc., will emerge. But a scaled-down 55 mph highway with off-ramps will cost so much less money and environmental destruction that we taxpayers come out way ahead.

Our state senator and aides to our governor, have been informed about our bypass issue, but from those advocating for or opposing the Caltrans design. Let us now find our center on the issue, and move forward with it.

Again, regardless of the outcome, our town begins to act, not react, as we have been doing. Pie in the sky? Naive? How else can this town unite and feel any power? Regardless of how this bypass looks in the end, how will we look at each other? Angry? Divided? Burned out? Not us.

Gary Relin, Willits

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transition," Ruckman said.

City Manager Adrienne Moore said she expects the position will cost about \$800 to \$1,200 per month.

The arts commission and the city also moved to better control access to the Center for the Arts building, with a new set of locks and security codes to help smooth operations.

When glitches occur regarding entry to the building, it is City Clerk Cathy Sanders and Commissioner Miller who investigate.

"Cathy and I converge on the building, not the cops," Miller said.

As the transition moves along, Moore encouraged the commission to work at increasing its volunteer base, "because, if you do not do, the perception in the community is that you are falling apart."

Commissioner Dale Dingman said the interim position requires a physical presence for answering phone calls. "That is the big complaint for many volunteers: that they do not get calls back," Dingman said.

Those present at the meeting were not sure whether one person could do it all.

"There are a lot of people who want to help, but we are not coordinated enough to use them," Miller said.

The city council must approve any money contributed by the city, but the cost of the position and funding for it were not decided during the commission meeting.

The WCA may, in the end, decide to pay for the position itself. Commissioner Jeff Crawford said the art center should fund the position for the six months achieving nonprofit status is expected to take.

But Miller opposed the idea. "I do not believe we will be able to afford it. It really worries me."

Ruckman, however, argued the commission could afford to fund the post.

Hal Wagenet asked commissioners to have three budget alternatives ready to present at their next meeting: all Center for the Arts funding; all city funding; and a plan for shared funding.

Willits formed the Cultural Arts Commission in 1993. Wedged between the Noyo Theater and the Carnegie Library building, the Center for the Arts hosts monthly art shows and other community events.

department and have a balanced budget," Orenstein said. "If we cannot look at the big ticket items, what is left?"

Strong, Madrigal and Orenstein voted to approve hiring former Planning Director Alan Falleri to do consulting on planning issues at a cost of \$11,500, to be split between Willits water and sewer funds.

Stranske and Burton opposed the move. "We have spent \$25,000 already," Stranske said. "We have increased the budget by \$25,000."

Strong said she would like to look at more structural ways to balance the budget.

Gas Tax Deficit

The Willits Gas Tax fund was found to be about \$180,000 in the red going into the council meeting.

"We cannot carry forward a negative balance in the gas tax fund," Burton said.

Stranske was concerned about where Willits would get the money for spending approved by the council.

"It is more money and more money, and one of these days there is not going to be enough money to fix the roads," Stranske said.

City staff is seeking ways to save that money in Willits street maintenance department.

Brooktrails' money absent

Drafts of the City of Willits budget bank on more than \$500,000 from Brooktrails for sewer services, but that money has not been coming in for about six months.

Brooktrails paid up to last January, then decided to stop, Madrigal said. "This money is in our budget, [but] this money is not in our bank account."

The city is engaged in an ongoing sewer lawsuit with the Brooktrails Community Services District, and the city is being urged to take its differences with the township to court.

Willits needs to set a trial date, City Attorney Jim Lance said.

Burton said he wanted the city to address a letter to Brooktrails and the state water board stating an intent by Willits to stop sewer service to Brooktrails.

"If we cannot cease to provide service, then there is no reason for them to send us another dime," Burton said.

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# Community News

Heartwarming stories & local tidbits



Photo above by Mphotographress and Roseann Bath

## 10 Years!



Photos above and below courtesy Tana Craighead



Willits High School class of 2003 holds three-day reunion last weekend

Several members of the Willits High School Class of 2003 came back to Willits for a reunion weekend celebration, and all enjoyed catching up and remembering how things were a decade ago.

The weekend kicked off with a bar crawl on Friday night. Around 20 alumni went to the Shanachie Pub, Al's Redwood Room and then Digger's Bar and reminisced, enjoyed drinks together and danced the night away.

Saturday, around 30 alumni along with family and kids gathered at the Rec Grove park for a barbecue and potluck picnic. Kids played in a pool, and classmates played horseshoes, bean bag toss and chatted for hours in the afternoon sun.

Sunday, a few gathered at the river for a float downstream, reminiscent of days spent on the Eel, instead of being in class, during those last weeks of senior summer.

A Facebook page is set up for the reunion, and anyone who missed this year's event can contact Melissa Tobin or Sarah Hall via the page "WHS Class of 2003" to get on the list for the 20-year reunion.

Top: Attendees of the Saturday alumni potluck; left top: alumni enjoy the bar scene Friday-night; below: alumni enjoy dinner at El Mexicano.