

Welcome to Willits Weekly!



We're proud of our first issue, and we hope you enjoy reading it

Willits Weekly is a locally owned independent newspaper founded by a core group of newspaper veterans with experience in local news reporting, feature writing, and newspaper design and production.

We provide accurate and timely local news as well as interesting and inspiring features about community affairs to readers in greater Willits. We invite letters and editorial commentary and will publish a rotating group of opinion and feature columnists from a wide spectrum of the community.

Willits Weekly covers local government in a comprehensive way, including the Willits City Council (beat reporter Zack Cinek), the Brooktrails Township Community Services District

Board (beat reporter Mike A'Dair), the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (beat reporter Mike A'Dair), the Willits Unified School District Board of Trustees (beat reporter Jennifer Poole), and more.

Maureen Moore is doing page design and photography for the newspaper, Jennifer Poole is editor, and reporter Cat Lee is our "Cat About Town," covering it all.

We are published every Thursday. Find us around town at local businesses in Willits – and in Ukiah. Willits Weekly is free of charge, supported by our advertisers and by community sponsors. To learn more about becoming a community sponsor – you can get Willits Weekly for free, but if you

like it, chip in to keep it going! – check www.willitsweekly.com.

The Willits Weekly Facebook page has been up for about 10 weeks, and is a well-read and lively record of community life in Willits, also featuring breaking news and extra stories not found in our print edition.

Willits Weekly provides affordable display and classified advertising for local small businesses, professionals, entrepreneurs, community groups, nonprofits and individuals. With distribution starting early Thursday morning, Willits Weekly will spotlight ads, editorial coverage and calendar listings for events for the coming weekend in Willits.

Our website www.willitsweekly.com is still under construction, but will be updated regularly, with news and notes of interest, as well as stories from our print edition.

Thanks to all our advertisers who bought advertisements in our first edition. Thanks to those who've become early community sponsors: It's because of you that we are able to launch this exciting new project.

Co-Founders, Willits Weekly

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

Fish tacos at Rio's

To the Editor:

I just had lunch at Rio's Fish and Chips in Willits, and it was great. I blush that it has taken me this long to try it, but I am glad I did. (I have not been there since Chad's was in that location.) Owned by a local family, they have now been open for a while.

The fish tacos were scrumptious and only \$1.75 each. They have a chipotle cream topping with cabbage and were not skimpy. My co-worker told me they get their fish in fresh regularly from Fort Bragg. My dining partner also talked me into trying the hush puppies, which were decadent. It is nice to have a super-affordable lunch option in Willits, and I am a sucker for good fish tacos.

I know it must be hard to make it in a small town like ours, so I want to give these guys a boost. They are at the south end of town across from the Evergreen Center. Rio's Fish and Chips 1661 S. Main St. Willits, 459-3105.

Holly Madrigal
Willits, CA

There's a better way

To the Editor:

I am an environmentalist! There, I said it. I have been all my life I suppose. Ever since I learned, on the back of a horse, that nature is where I would rather be. In the 1960s I learned to be in tune with nature in the High Sierras and high desert. Away from the busy, noisy city. During my youth I watched the empty spaces in LA County rapidly disappear due to progress. Remember the song "They Paved Paradise and Put Up a Parking Lot?" I watched it happen.

I have been very vocal about the protection of the Ridgewood Ranch from a zoning change that could affect the ranch for years to come. During the last several weeks, I have become even more passionate about the protection of the beautiful place that I moved to in order to raise my family away from those noisy cities.

I hear things about "not from here" or "she's only been here a few years." That makes me wonder if that is how people feel about me? I mean, how long does one need to live here to be a "local"? A year? Five years? A lifetime? Just how long? I have lived in Willits for 27-plus years now. We built our house and sent four children through the Willits Unified school system. They are all fine upstanding citizens with some of their children now going to school here.

So please tell me what is a "local"? Do you see me as a "dirty long haired hippy"? "Uneducated" or a "non-tax payer"? Those are the terms I have heard bantered around about the protestors. I take issue with that. Our family has been contributing to the tax base of this county from the moment we moved here. Yet we are all lumped together in

the eyes of the pro-bypass supporters.

I find it interesting that the most derogatory remarks I have heard have come from people whom I thought were well-educated. Some are friends of mine whom I thought I knew better. People who now seem to me to be very small-minded. People who say things like "cut the trees down with them in them" or "shoot them down," or "wouldn't it be fun to drive by the protesters with paint ball guns," and many other statements too disgusting to print. People who don't search out the facts of an issue and just go along with it because "they heard..." Funny I don't hear that kind of immature name-calling from the protesters, most of whom are, like me, supportive, hard-working, tax-paying citizens of this beautiful county.

Which brings me to the issue at hand. I ask all of you who weren't "born" here, what brought you here? We all have our stories. Why did you, or your parents, or grandparents move here to begin with? The beauty of the Little Lake Valley can't be found very often in this day and age. A valley that turns into a small lake every winter for a reason. Supporting fish and wildlife habitat is its job! That job is about to be taken away. No amount of mitigation measures are going to replace those wetlands, or save the lost grazing for the elk and deer and cattle who all depend on it.

These wetlands are headwaters to the Eel River and its very important salmon-spawning tributaries. What is going to happen when all that water is "soaked up" by the so-called "wicks" they will employ? I can only imagine how some of the old-time ranchers in the valley feel about what is about to happen. They are "keepers of the land," as well. That is why the California Farm Bureau joined the lawsuit. I can't imagine this beautiful "one of a kind" valley with a huge berm and viaduct cutting through it. Can you?

I have read comments from residents of Cloverdale telling us that they have survived just fine and are even better off with their bypass. But the circumstances in Willits are much, much different than Cloverdale.

None of the people who live and work around here deny that a solution is desperately needed. People say "well, why haven't they protested before? They had plenty of time." It has been disagreed upon before and, no one has listened. This is a last-ditch effort to get the attention of the Big Mighty Steamroller that is Caltrans. There have been several other solutions presented that are cheaper and make more sense. But Caltrans has turned a deaf ear. Our tax dollars are not working for the residents of Willits and Mendocino County. If they were serious about our traffic, there would be a Highway 20 interchange of some sort. There is not! How many people are employed in Willits who live in Ukiah or Fort Bragg or Laytonville? How many Willits residents are employed in Ukiah or Fort Bragg? How many companies in Willits have many trucks arriving and departing daily? This bypass, as designed, will not help those people. It won't help any of the residents that live south or north of town. It will not help the congestion that occurs at lunchtime or after school. It will not help congestion at Sherwood Road. It will not help the tourist congestion headed to and from the coast. And it will not help the always-slipping Ridgewood Grade. The Grade ... now there is a lesson in Mother Nature! How is Caltrans going to manage a seasonal lake and wetlands when they can't manage a constantly moving mountain on the Ridgewood Grade? No amount of Styrofoam will stabilize that mountain.

So before all the name-calling gets out of hand and seriously divides this community that we all love, let's pay attention to the facts.

Our tax money could be better spent by using one of the cheaper, less destructive alternatives. Think about it!

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.

As our beloved Ed Burton used to say, "There's a Better Way."

Roni McFadden
Willits, CA
President, Keep The Code

p.s.: After this letter was first published, several local ranchers called me thanking me for speaking up for them. They have opposed this plan at public meetings for dozens of years. No one has listened to them.

In fact, Caltrans was so out of touch with them that a couple of weeks ago, in their rush to put up fencing, they cut a fence at one ranch and let the cows out. No phone call to the rancher or any warning that they should move the cows. Just plowed through and cows be damned! Who would have been responsible if a car had hit one of those cows? You can bet Big Orange wouldn't take responsibility!

A common-sense approach

To the Editor:

A sad and unnecessary chapter is unfolding before us in Little Lake Valley. Phil Dow's attempt to fulfill his lifelong dream of a Caltrans bypass around Willits is grinding slowly ahead, slashing, mutilating and destroying a once glorious old growth oak and madrone woodland. This first-phase onslaught on the environment is almost complete at the south end of the proposed bypass. Nesting birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals have already been sacrificed.

A common-sense approach to solving a minor traffic back-up in Willits, created by Caltrans in 1994, would be to re-stripe Highway 101 from the hospital to the Highway 20 intersection. Caltrans said they would do this but not until "next year". They arranged a 20 year bottleneck and now offer to uncork it after they garnered public support for their bypass.

The next step of a common-sense approach is to connect Baechtel Road and Railroad Avenue so locals can use the side streets, then, if necessary, put back on the table the railroad right of way truck route. Just the re-striping and the Baechtel/Railroad Avenue connection would alleviate traffic back-ups considerably.

In a dialogue with Phil Frisbie, spokesperson for Caltrans, he acknowledged that if he were advising on this project 10 years ago he would recommend the above-listed steps be taken. He then said that this project is too far along with the environmental approvals and permits to stop it. I disagree. It is not too late to stop a huge waste of taxpayer dollars on a project that will forever destroy the character and ecosystem of Little Lake Valley. A 200-foot-wide dead zone, swelling massively at both ends and consuming one-quarter of the valley's arable farmland, is not a good solution to a minor slowdown of traffic.

An 8 percent decline in traffic volume at the Muir Mill Road intersection over the last four years is an indication that the Caltrans projections of a 59 percent increase in traffic volumes over 20 years is likely not to materialize. Stagnant growth, a weakening economy, localization, rising fuel costs, a timber industry in decline, and the legalization progress in the marijuana industry, seem to point to lower traffic increases rather than a doubling of traffic over 40 years.

The \$210 million figure for the first phase of the bypass is incorrect. The bulk of the funding for this project is \$135.5 million in transportation bonds authorized by voters under Proposition 1B. These bonds carry a hefty price: depending on the interest rate at the time of the bond sale, the end cost of borrowing money through issuing bonds can be nearly double, according to the state Legislative Analyst's Office. Coupled with the standard 20 percent cost overruns that are usual for a project of this size, plus unknown millions in mitigation costs, and the real figure will be closer to a half of a billion dollars, just for the first phase.

The waste of taxpayer money for this destructive swath through Little Lake Valley cannot be justified. Currently a mere 7,400 vehicles a day (8 percent of them trucks) would use this two-lane bypass which only reaches capacity at 40,000 vehicles a day.

John Wagenet
Willits, CA

Willits Weekly is a locally owned independent newspaper, founded in 2013, covering the greater Willits area.

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Community News

Heartwarming stories & local tidbits

An unplanned rescue

Vintage truck contained more than acorns

Saving a '48 Dodge from its planned demolish at Willits Towing & Recovery was not only a good thing for the vehicle, but also saved the lives of three kittens who had been living inside, too.

Maureen Moore
Designer & Photographress
maureen@willitsweekly.com

Christopher Moore, an avid vintage Volkswagen collector, went to check out another automobile at the wrecking yard, when the vintage green Dodge also caught his eye.

Needing more vehicles like Imelda Marcos needed more shoes, Moore couldn't resist. The mossy green doors, the damaged, but surely story-filled wooden built-in trailer walls, and acorn-filled seats didn't sway him. He purchased and then towed the Dodge home that day.

It sat awaiting removal from the tow trailer for several days and finally, with assistance from business partner and additional auto aficionado Alan Grossman, the two decided to unload the truck and move it to a better parking spot.

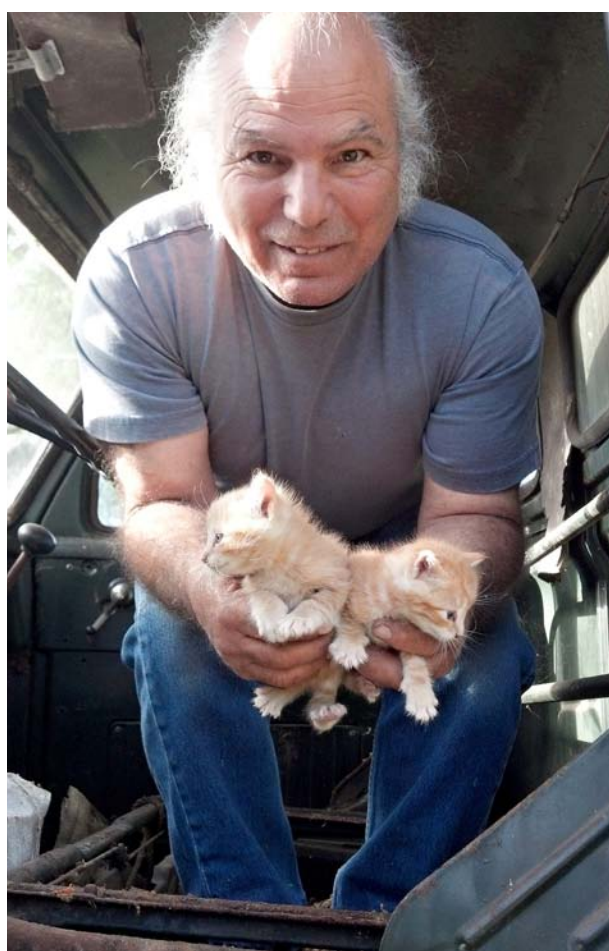
While assessing the best way to attach the tow rope, the high-pitched mews of an unmistakable sound was heard from the cab.

Kittens.

The two poked around inside the cab, trying to locate the mewers and finally, behind the decaying seat, they saw three blue-eyed, fluffy tabbies; two orange and one grey, hiding behind the backrest.

Frightened, the kittens retreated up into the inaccessible area of the springs and cushion of the front bench seat, forcing Grossman and Moore to excavate and pull apart the bench to free the kittens.

After hanging through the window of the stuck passenger door, and carefully removing layers of stuffing, dirt and debris, the rescuers safely scooped up the kittens



Above: Christopher Moore holds two of the found kittens.

Below left: The Dodge the kittens called home.

Below right: The third kitten found.

Photos: Willits Weekly/Maureen Moore

and placed them into a clean crate.

Though dirty and shaken, the kittens appeared to be in relatively good shape, despite being without obvious tending for several days.

A mother was not found nor had one been seen or heard since the truck's arrival, and without being sure where she could be – or if she was still at the wrecking yard – the decision was made to take the kittens to the Humane Society of Inland Mendocino County where they could receive proper feeding, care and eventual adoption.

Bryson Walker of Coast Hardware assisted with the transfer of the kittens and is a wonderful advocate for assisting in placing cats in local homes.

If you would like to adopt a cat and are interested in learning more, contact Walker at 707-972-9952 or the Humane Society at 485-0123.



Congratulations Column



Charlotte Pearl Belle Arkelian

Charlotte Pearl Belle Arkelian was born Monday, March 11, 2013 at 10:34 pm to John and Fawn Arkelian. She was 8 pounds, 3 ounces and 19 inches long. Waiting at home for their baby sister were Ava, 4 and Stella, 2. Doting grandparents include Tom and Debbie Peterson, Marty and Nancy Arkelian, Jack and Candi Tharp and the late William Flanagan.

Ayla Paige Carter



Ayla Paige Carter was born on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 at 12:49 pm to Steve and Cara Carter. She was 6 pounds, 11 oz and 19 inches long. Admiring grandparents included Kate Carter and Richard Myers and Bill and Terri Petersen and affectionate aunts and uncles included Mike and Shantil Ferguson, Jesse and Leah Carter, Jennifer Parry and Shawna Parry.



Austin James Herreshoff

Austin James Herreshoff was an April Fools baby, born on Monday, April 1, 2013 to Chris and Katelyn Herreshoff. Weighing only 5 pounds, 6 ounces he was a tiny bundle of joy not only to his parents, but adoring grandparents: Jim Rogoff and Deb Kvaka and Stephanie Austin and Daniel Herreshoff.

Jacob & Briann Jones



Jacob Jones and Briann (Venturi) Jones are happy to announce their wedding that took place on Saturday, March 30th at Squaw Valley. Close family and friends attended the beautiful ceremony and the two now reside in Redwood Valley with their dog, Isis and cat, Phoebe.

The Rules: COMMUNITY NEWS

Community News: Willits Weekly welcomes articles about community news, events and activities. Each week's deadline is end of day Monday for Thursday's edition.

Please send community news articles via email: willitsweekly@gmail.com. Community news may also be mailed to: Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits 95490, but email is preferred.

Make sure to include a contact name and phone number. If you're sending digital photographs to accompany your article, high-resolution photos are best. Call 459-2633 with any questions about submitting community news.

The Rules: CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations Column: Willits Weekly is pleased to publish small congratulatory notes to locals in this column. Each week's deadline is end of day Monday for Thursday's edition, and notes should be no longer than 100 words.

Please send notes on births, engagements, weddings, milestone birthdays, job promotions and other appropriate events via email: willitsweekly@gmail.com. They may also be mailed to: Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits 95490, but email is preferred.

If you're sending a digital photograph you'd like us to use in the paper, a high-resolution photo is best.

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



707-972-7047

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School of Agricultural Arts

on Seabiscuit Ranch to break ground in May

A new local project has the ambitious mission to train our next generation of farmers, provide workshops for home gardeners, and give youth an enriching farm experience.

Antonia Partridge
Contributing Writer

The California Grange School of the Agricultural Arts located on the historic Seabiscuit ranch is expected to break ground in May. Sponsored by the California State Grange, the core of the program will be a nine-month residential training for

aspiring farmers.

The need for new farmers is urgent. Farmers age 65 and over outnumber farmers under age 25 by approximately 60 to 1. The traditional inter-generational farmer training on the family farm cannot be relied upon as in generations past. As established farmers retire, well-trained new farmers are needed to fill the gap and ensure an adequate food supply. The demand for farm schools is clear, as established programs have many more qualified applicants than they have capacity to accept. The new Grange Ag School will work to solve these challenges by training a new generation of farmers in sustainable agriculture.

In the first three months of the project, May, June, and July of 2013 we have the goal to literally break ground, converting the field now in pasture to tilled land for fruit and vegetable crops. We will put up fencing, develop housing for students, construct a tool shed, build chicken coop, and maintain the orchard. Several of these building projects will

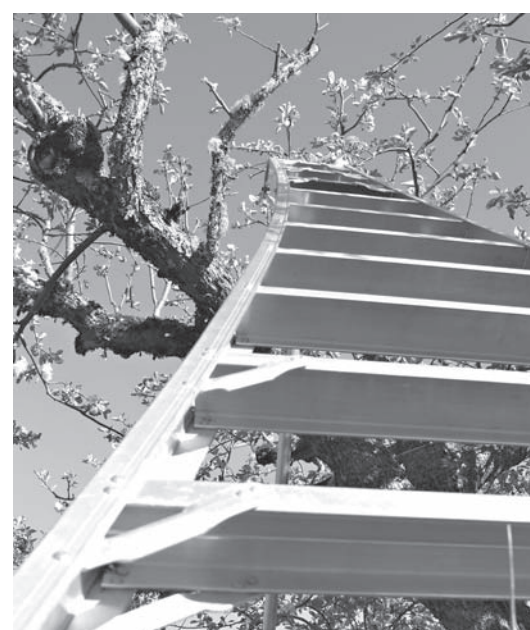


be part of a workshop series covering topics such as introduction of carpentry, housing for chickens, and garden season extension. In July the Ag School will begin to host practicum students who will live on site in a work-study arrangement.

This project welcome volunteers, donations of goods and services, or pledges of funds. The farm will need a wide variety of goods, and every piece we receive as a donation makes our limited funding go farther. A glimpse at our list of needed items includes: pick-up truck, T-posts, carpentry tools, lumber, wheelbarrow, hand tools, twin beds, kitchen equipment, chicken feeder, office equipment, safety gear.... The list goes on and on. Soon our first work days on the farm will be scheduled, and volunteers are encouraged to attend. Contact Michael Foley at 707 216-5549 or foley.mw@gmail.com for more information.



Photographs from the site of the new California Grange School of the Agricultural Arts at the historic Ridgewood Ranch.



BYPASS, from Page 1

"It's really not allowed under the incidental take permit. A provision in there clearly spells out it's a violation of the incidental take permit to be cutting those trees, which obviously have nests in them."

Whitney said activists did not want to go to court: "We want Fish and Wildlife to enforce the law," he said. "But if they don't give us a stop work order or some rational reason why it's not a violation, then we could be forced to go to court."

Many actions and conditions in the permit documents that were required to be complete before Caltrans proceeded with clearing work have not been fulfilled, the letter says.

Rosamond Crowder of the Willits

Environmental Center describes the demand letter as "a shot across the bow" because Caltrans is "seriously out of compliance with just about everything" required by the two permits.

"We think it's wrong that the Department of Fish & Wildlife issued a letter to go ahead with the project even though Caltrans was out of compliance with the 1602 and incidental take permits before they even started."

The intent of the law, Crowder said, is that mitigation must not only be planned, but be secured: "and that doesn't just mean funding, but it means conservation easements, and it means a plan that's been approved by the people who are

going to take over that land management, and that plan hasn't even been finished, let alone approved."

A request from the Mendocino Council of Governments and the Department of Transportation to delay the Ryan Creek mitigation project for a year, has activists and fish advocates concerned, too. This request is one of the agenda items on the California Transportation Commission's May 7 agenda, which also contains a request for \$30 million for mitigation funds for the Willits bypass project.

"Little Lake Valley is home to the longest coho salmon run in northern California, as well as steelhead and chinook salmon," said Save Our Little Lake Valley member

Jamie Chevalier. "The stop work order is essential to protecting the future of salmon in this valley."

The letter was addressed to Neil Manji, regional manager of the California Department of Fish & Wildlife's Northern Region in Redding. A call to the Redding office was shunted to a media representative's voice mail and was not returned.

Phil Dow of the Mendocino County of Governments told Willits Weekly that, in conversation with

Matt Brady, Caltrans' deputy director for District 1, Brady told him Caltrans is not in violation of their permits, that the highway agency had already consulted with all the permitting agencies, and had concurrence on permitted activities.

Dow also said Caltrans' reason for the requested delay for the Ryan Creek mitigation project was because the agency wanted to have the same team of workers who know the area well – "the environmental people, the right of way people, the designers," Dow said – handle that mitigation project as were working on the main bypass project.

Dow said Caltrans could have brought in people from the outside, to stay on schedule, but wanted to keep the same people working "for continuity's sake."

~ The Mendocino College Agriculture Department and Horticulture Club ~

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Bring me Little water, Sylvie

There have been many types of work parties at the Frank Grasse Dog Park.

There were parties when volunteers gathered to clear brush, prune willow clumps, and haul branches to a burn pile.

There were huge work parties where 25 volunteers gathered to build 750 feet of chain link fence in one morning.

Recently, a work party planted trees at the park.

And then there was the work party that met on Saturday, April 27 to install an irrigation system for the planted trees, and to bring water to the Little Dog Park.

A walk-behind trencher was on the site that morning, and Ron Stamps and Ron Westlund volunteered to take on the trenching work. About 550 feet of trenching needed to be done. Not only that, the ground was full of rocks and chunks of blacktop. The trencher protested constantly, stalling out whenever it hit a particularly big rock. The two Rons were unfazed by the trencher's bouts of pique. They just kept at it. They could do it. They were the Rons. They were the Do-Ron-Rons.

Ian Fitzpatrick hand-dug the trench over an area where a 6-inch Willits water pipeline under pressure was known to pass. Busting that pipe could definitely have put a crimp in the tranquil morning.

After the Do-Ron-Rons left an area trenched, Chris Harper moved in to lay the irrigation pipes. There were a lot of pipes. But the job had its strange perks.

Sniffing all that PVC glue and primer can have a curious effect on one's sense of reality. And while Chris seemed to be

in complete control of the work process, he was occasionally seen gazing wistfully at the blue, blue sky, the big birds wheeling above, the thin clouds moving in their purposeful way toward a destination so far away... so far away.

Larry Desmond took on the laying of the water lines from the big dog park to the Little Dog Park. Larry had had plans for this weekend. Working at the dog park was not one of them. But after he got the call, he agreed and came.

He singlehandedly dug the trench between the two parks. Then he laid in the water lines. When the Do-Ron-Rons trenched the Little Park, Larry laid in the irrigation lines there as well.

Sally Rohlicek, hearing how much work needed to be done, showed up and started filling the finished trenches with the dirt dug up by the trencher. It wasn't much fun, but she stuck with it.

Hans Vester showed up to run his dog, and wound up filling in trenches as well.

While Louis Rohlicek installed the ball valves to activate the tree irrigations, Larry back-filled the Little Park trenches.

It was a long day, and everyone seemed to stagger out of the park when their work was done.



Rattlesnakes & Dogs

Every year when the weather warms up, I remind people to beware of rattlesnakes when walking and hiking with their dogs or even when the dog is outside in his own yard. The reaction I usually get from people is "eewwww," followed by a look of dread. Rattlesnakes are dangerous and can kill your dog in an ugly way. Protecting your dog from them isn't easy.

Most dogs are curious animals. They are also predators. When they see a snake or lizard they want to investigate. The first thing they do is go up to sniff the reptile. This is why most snake bites are to the face and front legs of the dog. If you have a dog that chases lizards, they will most likely go after a snake.

So, what can you do to help protect your dog? The obvious answer is to not go in areas that are known to have snakes. This isn't always practical and, in some areas, they seem to be everywhere. I have them living in my front yard.

You can go to a "rattlesnake clinic," however I have not found these to be very effective. I used to recommend them to clients. They were costly, ranging from \$25 to \$100. Several clients who took their dogs to the training reported that their dogs were bitten by rattlesnakes shortly after the training. It cost them over \$1,000 for treatment. One client reported that her dog was playing with a snake the very next day after the rattlesnake clinic, and another reported that a rattlesnake was on the deck while her dog was only a few feet away in his dog bed.

How do the clinics work? An electronic collar is placed on the dog. Usually a stranger takes your dog from you and walks him to an area where a rattlesnake has been muzzled. When the dog focuses in on the snake, the dog is given a high-level shock. Then the dog is introduced to another snake, and the procedure is repeated. This is great in theory, but usually the dog learns to avoid snakes in that area of the training and doesn't necessarily transfer the training to his familiar environment or when he's with his owner.

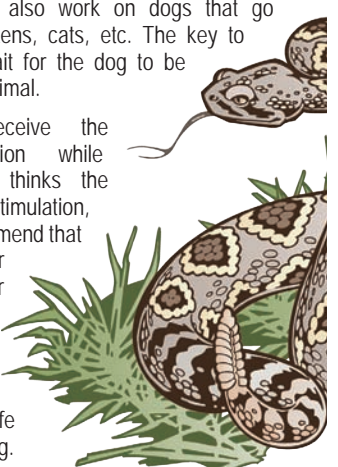
This is what I recommend and do with my own dogs. I purchased a Dogtra IQ e-collar for \$180 (the cost of approximately two rattlesnake clinic trainings). I place it on my dog before I go for a walk or out in the yard. I wait to see if my dog focuses on a lizard or any other reptile. It does not have to be a rattlesnake. I will also use dead snakes if I come across them.

If the dog shows any interest at all in the reptile, I wait until he has focused his attention on it. I will give him a STRONG stimulation. I will repeat this daily until I see the dog actively avoiding and staying away from all reptiles.

I know this isn't a pleasant form of training; however it just may save your dog's life and keep him from unnecessary suffering.

This training will also work on dogs that go after squirrels, chickens, cats, etc. The key to the training is to wait for the dog to be FOCUSED on the animal.

When they receive the STRONG stimulation while focused, the dog thinks the animal caused the stimulation, not you. I also recommend that you discuss with your veterinarian whether or not a rattlesnake vaccination would be appropriate for your dog. I hope you have a safe summer with your dog.



ABOUT SALLIE: Sallie Palmer is a Certified Dog Trainer and a member of the International Association of Canine Professionals and the Association of Humane Dog Training and an American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen Evaluator. She offers private & group dog training, behavior consultation and dog events. For more information about Sallie, go to www.wellmanneredmutts.com.

At top: (left) The new PVC installed during Saturday's work party and (right) Larry Desmond and Louis Rohlicek take a break after digging.

At right: The Do-Ron-Rons, Ron Stamps and Ron Westlund, work with the trencher.

Below left: Chris Harper and Sally Rohlicek pause for a photo during the work party.

Below right: Roxie the dog appreciates water in the park's swimming pool and looks forward to others enjoying water in the same way at the Little Dog Park.

Photos 2, 3 & 4 - Courtesy of Louis Rohlicek
Photos 1 & 5 - Willits Weekly/Maureen Moore



Scan with QR reader on smartphones to learn more about the dog park



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Telephone: 707.459.5992
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What's Happening Around Town

Things to do, see and enjoy in and around Willits



Thursday, May 2

First Farmers Market at City Park: 3 to 6 pm, including Willits Maypole Celebration, with a Community Maypole dance starting around 3:30 pm Live music, flower garland making, face painting, along with spring vegetables, garden starts, crafts, baked goods, dinner and other edibles from vendors at the farmers market.

Sewing With Betty: a Textile Skill Sharing event at the Little Lake Grange's Textile Studio, 7 pm. "Fix-It" Mentor Betty Walters: How to use your sewing machine, making simple things, getting started, fixing a sewing machine. More info: Annie at 459-6362.

Friday, May 3

"Dead Man's Cell Phone": this edgy dark romantic comedy by prizewinning contemporary playwright Sara Ruhl opens tonight at the Willits Community Theatre Playhouse at 8 pm. "Dead Man's Cell Phone" continues Thursdays (7 pm, \$10), Fridays and Saturdays (8 pm, \$15) and Sundays (2 pm, \$10) through May 19. Directed by Bill Barksdale; produced by Lynn Dee Johnson; starring Karla McDonald, Damian Sebouhian, Gay Sibley, Anita Benzing and Samatha Guida. Adult language. The theater is located at 37 W. Van Lane; tickets are available at the Goods' Shoppe or by calling 459-0895 to reserve tickets by credit card.

Shanachie Pub: House of Love DJ Dance Party, 9 pm, no cover charge. Monthly dance party hosted by Podge featuring Justin Hale. Check out Hale's house, tech-house, electro-house and breaks here: <http://four4ths.com/dj/justinhale/> (or scan QR Code to visit site)

Saturday, May 4

Grange Exchange: Flea market and swap meet, 9 am to 1 pm, first Saturday of every month, Little Lake Grange. Buy, sell, barter and trade, and check out the "free" table. To reserve a space, call Anna at 707-671-6995.

"Are You Ready?": Death and Dying at Home workshop to explore practical and emotional issues related to death, including funerals and the burial process, grief and loss, caregiving, dying at home, and documents related to dying and estate planning. 9 am to 5 pm. Willits United Methodist Church, Pine and School streets. Admission by donation, lunch included. More info: Carlin Diamond 459-4850 or Sienna Stone 459-5621.

Mendocino Fire Safe Council public forum: 11 to 2 pm at CalFire's Howard Forest Station, at the top of the Willits grade. Mendocino National Forest Supervisor Sherry Tune will speak about a new program called "Fire Escape," and upcoming grant opportunities from the California Fire Safe Council will also be discussed. Light lunch provided. More info: De-Anne Hooper, Mendocino County Fire Safe Council, 462-3662, firesafe@pacific.net or check www.firesafemendocino.org.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration: Willits Elementary Charter School at the Rec Grove, 1 to 5 pm. Featuring a salsa competition with entries by local restaurants; student performances; DJs from L.D.U. Entertainment; raffle and silent auction, and traditional Mexican food and aguas frescas.

Mad Hatter's Tea Party: 1 to 3 pm on the Lawn at Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens in Fort Bragg. Tea, goodies, games and children's activities. A celebration, hosted by Emmy and Bill Good of Goods' Shoppe in Willits, of the new metal sculptures created by daughter Keena Good, installed at the gardens. Information: 459-1363.

"Journeys": an art show at the Willits Center for the Arts, hosted by Manzanita Services, for Mental Health Month in May. Artists' reception, 7 to 9 pm tonight. Paintings, sculptures, poetry, dolls, jewelry, ceramics, metalwork, and the unfinished "Journeys Quilt," by participants at Manzanita, family members and friends, mental health workers, and community members. Gallery hours: Thursdays and Fridays, 4 to 7 pm; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 3 pm. Through May 26.

Brooktrails Firefighters Spaghetti Feed: annual benefit for the Brooktrails Firefighters Association, 5 to 8 pm. Brooktrails Community Center. Tickets: \$10, adults; \$5, 12 and under. No-host bar provided by the Lions Club of Willits. Tickets at the door or in advance at the Brooktrails Fire Station. Information: 459-4441.

The Rules: CALENDAR LISTINGS

Calendar Listings: Willits Weekly is pleased to publish calendar listings and promotional articles for Willits events and activities. Each week's deadline is end of day Monday for Thursday's edition.

Please send calendar listings and press releases via email: willitsweekly@gmail.com. Email us the electronic versions of posters or flyers you've made to publicize your event, too. Calendar listings, press releases and flyers may also be mailed to: Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits 95490, but email is preferred.

Make sure to include a contact name and phone number. If you're sending a digital photograph you'd like us to use in the paper, a high-resolution photo is best.

St. Anthony's 15th Annual Festival: 5 to 9 pm, St. Anthony's Parish Hall. Break out your tropical wear and set sail for the islands. Taste a selection of wines and beers from local wineries and micro breweries. Food, door prizes, a silent auction and raffle. Music by D.J. Hal Wagenet and live island music by Ronnie Lee. Admission: \$20. Tickets at the door or from Jill Persico at Loose Caboose Café / 459.1434; Peggy Ramirez / 972.2016; Mary Horgor / 354.2101 or Kathy Neff / 459.9547.

Shanachie Pub: Shawn Coleman with special guest John Perez, 8 pm, no cover charge. Coleman fronts the local hard rock/metal band The Fulcrum but tonight showcases some solo tunes. Also accompanied by The Fulcrum's Jeff Martin. Check Coleman's solo work here: www.reverbnation.com/shawncoleman.

Sunday, May 5

Bingo at the Harrah Center: Doors open 10:30 am; games begin 11:30 am. Bingo buy in \$10; specials: \$2 & up. Snack bar opens at 11 am. BBQ Chicken, potato salad, cheesy garlic bread \$5.50. Assorted cheesecake \$2. Cookies 50 cents, 1501 Baechtel Road.

KYBU Round Valley Community Radio 2nd Annual Membership Drive: 1 pm at the Round Valley Library Commons. Featuring Miracle Dolls, an indie, punk and alternative band from Los Angeles, fronted by Hidatsa/Kiowa twin sisters Dezy and Dani De La Rosa. Entry by donation; free for members. Also featuring Backwordz Medicine (spoken word & drum songs from Mendocino County); Ty & Lucas (masters of the flamenco guitar), food, awards ceremony, piñatas, and more. www.kyburadio.org.



Peace Community Celebration: at Willits United Methodist Church, 286 School Street. Services: 11 am; Community BBQ: noon; Peace Celebration: 1 pm, with reading of the Peace Pole, introduction to walking the labyrinth, and music by Greg Schindel, members of Terpsichore, Willits UMC Folk Ensemble and the Chantrelles.

Tribute to Pete Seeger: Celebrate the legendary folk singer/songwriter ("If I Had a Hammer," "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and "Turn, Turn, Turn") and activist's 94th birthday at a sing-along tribute concert by the Emandal Chorale and Inland Valley Women's Chorus. Upstairs at the Willits Center for the Arts, at 6 pm. Donation at the door (no one turned away). More info: 367-1573 / dwills@mcn.org; or 459-1493 / mstrong@willitsonline.com.

Tuesday, May 7

"If Not Now, When?": Tonight's presentation on "Nutrition" is the first of series on health and well-being, every first Tuesday of the month through September at the Harrah Center. Featuring professionals in familiar and in alternative practices. Learn about the latest research, listen to testimonials, discover resources, and get answers to your questions. The topic next month, Tuesday, June 4 is "Medications." Info: 459-6826. Rides: 459-5556.

Thursday, May 9

Benefit "Dead Man's Cell Phone": A special benefit performance for Soroptimist International of Willits tonight. Includes hors d'oeuvres and beverage for \$15. Contact Marilyn at 459-5649 for tickets to this event. See Friday, May 3 listing for more information about the play.

Shanachie Pub: Lincoln Andrews & Company Jazz Jam, 8 pm. A new open jam format, every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month, featuring a variety of jazz musicians. Local and traveling "jazzies" are encouraged to bring their instrument of choice for a night of improvised genre-spanning jazz music.



Saturday, May 11

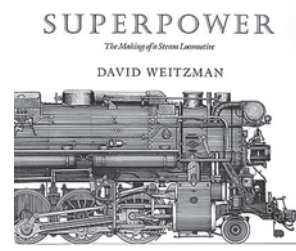
"Bass Buffet" featuring Jillian Ann: 10 pm to 4 am at the Brooktrails Lodge. A new multi-genre, future bass music show every second Saturday, from local promoters Figure 8 Sound, Mountain Lion Hi Fi, GruntWorthy,

and ZooKeepers. Multiple rooms with multiple DJs, light & laser crews AuroraScope and HyTyePromoteam, and custom visuals by Seeing Sounds. Los Angeles multimedia artist Jillian Ann (DJ, electronic producer, singer/songwriter) has just released the "Passes Away" EP on Simplify Recordings. \$10; 21+; full bar; dinner served until 9:30pm; rooms available: 459-1596. For more info, check "Bass Buffet" on Facebook.

At right: Director Bill Barksdale at work. Photo by Creek Norris

Below: Cast members at dress rehearsal. Photo by Cat Lee

Ongoing



"The Telling Line: A Display of Illustrations": this just-opened exhibit at the Mendocino County Museum features pen and ink drawings by illustrator and author of children's books David Weitzman, who's lived in Covelo since 1972.

For three decades, Weitzman has "united history, technical know-how, and detailed writing in a series of unique books for children that document the traditional occupations and trades of our American forebears." Weitzman's books include "Skywalkers: How Mohawk Ironworkers Build the City," "Superpower: The Making of a Steam Locomotive," and "Old Ironsides: Americans Build a Fighting Ship."

Subjects of local interest among this exhibit's drawings include "Grandma" Mavis Bromaghin, Locomotive No. 14 from the Roots of Motive Power collection, and the 1850 shipwreck of the Frolic on the Mendocino coast.

The museum, at 400 East Commercial Street, is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 am to 4:30 pm. Admission: \$4 adults; \$1 20 and under; free under 6. More info: 459-2736 or www.MendocinoMuseum.org.

Save the Date

May 13: Community Alliance meeting, with Ellen Drell, Library

May 17: Save Little Lake Valley Benefit, Dinner/Theater/Music, Grange

May 17 & 18: "The Sound of Music," Willits High School

May 18: Tea & Togs Fashion Show, Harrah Center

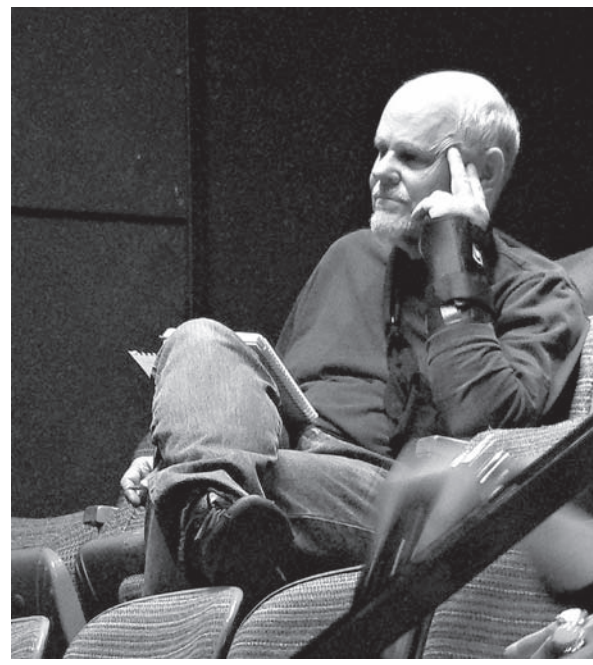
May 18: WHS Boosters Tri-Tip Dinner & Quarter Auction, Community Center

May 25 & 26: Community Car Show, Rec Grove

Spring Plant Sales

Commonwealth Garden's Spring Plant Fling: Sunday, May 19, from 12:30 to 4:30 pm. Vegetable, flower and herb starts in prime condition for setting out. At the Howard Foundation and Howard Memorial Hospital's Commonwealth Garden Greenhouse, 90 Haehl Creek Drive. More info: Ananda at 459-2777 or Caroly at 455-7732.

Grateful Cleaners Spring Plant Sale: Sunday, June 2 at 10 am, corner of West Mendocino and Spruce streets, beginning at 10 am. A variety of plants and starts for sale.



"Are You Ready?"

Workshop day for death and dying

A seminar and workshop day to inform and to empower the community about the process of death and dying is planned for Saturday, May 4, from 9 am to 5 pm at the Willits United Methodist Church, on the corner of Pine and School streets.

Cat Lee
Reporter
cat@willitsweekly.com

"My personal mission here is to inform everybody that wants to be informed about the options they have in taking care of their loved ones at the end of their lives," said Carlin Diamond, organizer of the event.

Diamond spent 19 years doing hospice work at the Phoenix Hospice in Willits and found it to be "such beautiful work, being with people in their homes" as they were reaching the end of their lives.

"And then there's a cut-off as soon as someone dies," she said, "People in their emotional state have to handle all these details."

It seemed that there was more that could be done to make the transition smoother by getting people involved in better planning and in educating themselves about their options.

She and others started talking and meeting a couple of years ago. "The focus initially was on a green burial group," she said, "to put someone as naturally in the earth as they had been treated by hospice at the end of their life."

People were interested in home funerals, too, so a couple of people in the group have been taking training in home funerals, Diamond said.

"How to keep them in your home or take them to burial ... the idea was to empower families to take care of their loved ones all the way until burial or cremation," she said. "That's how this workshop came about: to get people together and to give them a little more info and networking, so people can make their own educated choices."

"We invite you to an informative day with experts in the field, time for discussion, and workshops to further your special interest," Diamond said. "There will be handouts for you to further study, a book table, and a resource booklet to help you with future contacts as needs arise."

The first panel begins at 9:30 am and includes the following people and topics: Annette Wilson on personal experiences with issues at the end of life; Barry Vogel on burying on your own land; Miriam Raphael on the process of dying; Norman DeVall on burials at sea; Spring Senerchia and Maureen Taylor on green cemetery in the area.

Following the first panel, Robin Cottrell and Margy Henderson will present a short DVD on home funerals.

Lunch is next and is being provided under the direction of Sue Short and Hollis Rose. Topic cards will be on the tables to keep the ideas and discussions flowing.

After lunch, there will be two sets of workshops. In the first set, participants will choose between the following two discussions: "Exploring How Cultural and Traditional Rituals and Ceremonies Enhance the Dying Experience" with Eva Rosen, Kitty Norris, and Margy Henderson, and "Talking with Children, Family and Friends About Death/Finding Support and Allies Through the Grieving Process," with Robin Goldner and Roland Hulstein.

For the final workshop period of the day, participants will choose between these topics: "Caring For Your Loved One After Death at Home" with Maureen Taylor, Robin Cottrell, and Margy Henderson, and "Do Your Loved Ones a Favor: Documentation and Advanced Directives," with Barry Vogel, Marc Komer, and Maggie Watson.

After a full day, the Threshold Choir will help close out the event with singing.

Admission is by donation with lunch included. For more information contact Carlin Diamond at 459-4850.

"Dead Man's Cell Phone"

at the Willits Community Theatre

Cat Lee
Reporter
cat@willitsweekly.com

I love the theatre. I love it in so many ways, but what I will share is that every time I walk into one, I get a powerful memory flashback of when I was a freshman in high school. As a young girl, I had always wanted to be an actress or a dancer or singer, and finally, here I was in a real drama class. This was 1980-81 when "Fame," "Flashdance," and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" were current. This was edgy, artsy, geek-world, and it excited me.

"Dead Man's Cell Phone" is a perfect example of the memories that are evoked in me just walking into a theatre. It's THAT world -- that dark, glowing, magical, theatre-world of my blossoming youth.

The cast and crew of "Dead Man's Cell Phone" were running through the play last weekend, and I was lucky enough to catch a sneak preview of the show. The experience reminded me that I should patronize our local theatre more regularly. I really do love theatre drama.

"Dead Man's Cell Phone" opens Friday, May 3, at the Willits Community Theatre Playhouse, and from what I've already said, you should get the idea that I like what I see coming.

"Dead Man's Cell Phone" is being presented as a "darkly romantic comedy ... a blend of melancholy and humor" and also as a "hot contemporary" play. Sarah Ruhl is the playwright, and she begins the action in a restaurant when a woman named Jean (played by Karla McDonald) picks up a dead man's cell phone and answers it.

The game is on when she keeps the phone and answers his -- Gordon's -- calls. She becomes immersed in his life, and gets to experience his family and business close up and personal, including a brief visit with Gordon in "Hell."

The rest of the cast includes Damian Sebouhian in the dual roles of Gordon and his brother, Dwight. Gay Sibley plays Gordon's mother, Mrs. Gottlieb, Anita Benzing is Gordon's wife, and Samantha Guida plays the role of Gordon's mistress.

"Dead Man's Cell Phone" is produced by Lynn Dee

Johnson.

Director Bill Barksdale wants his audiences not only to be entertained but to have something to think about afterwards. His intention is for the play to live on in the minds of those who see it, beyond the hour-and-a-half of the onstage shelf life of the play.

As I was heading to bed the night after this rehearsal, it was all still swimming around in my head. His intention seems to be working: as I got into bed and turned off the light, within five minutes I had to sit up, turn on the light, and write this about the play: "subtle, yet biting, penetrating sarcasm" and "sharp wit."

That's what my mind seemed to want to capture before heading into dreamland that night. I remember working it over -- trying to pinpoint what had made me chuckle so many times during the rehearsal.

I laughed out loud a couple of times, I remember, and then felt self-conscious, not only for being too loud but for laughing at what I would sometimes call inappropriate humor.

It's not really inappropriate at all, but the subject matter is dark, and self-reflection comes as a byproduct of that for me. Hence, I felt over-exposed by laughing so genuinely and freely during the rehearsal. But it was real.

On that note, those involved in the production of this play want to be very clear that adult language and adult themes and subject matter are a part of this play, including death and the selling of "products" related to it and sex -- solo and extra-marital come to my mind -- so be prepared for grown-up topics to be triggered and explored.

I was busy mostly with trying to take good photos during the rehearsal but also with enjoying the play, so I didn't take very many notes. Without giving away too much I'll share a few lines that caught my attention. I'll be paraphrasing, so don't nit-pick the exact words:

"Ribbons of flesh and ribbons of fat all in one bite."

"She named me Dwight not after the President ... but because she felt sorry for the name."

"I connect people.... I put people together ... the redistribution of people ... like one umbrella covers three people."

"I don't dip my sushi in soy sauce ... that's for kids."

I'm calling this one a winner in my book. And I will be patronizing the theatre more often. The quality and the diverse variety of entertainment offered is a treasure in our small community and is a fabulous value for one's dollars. Opening weekend shows are this Friday and Saturday, May 3 and 4, at 8 pm. It plays through May 19. Tickets are available at Goods' Shoppe, or reservations can be made with a credit card by calling the theatre at 459-0895. Here's a link: <http://www.willits theatre.org>.

Cinco de Mayo Fiesta



Willits Elementary Charter School students trying on fancy dresses provided by Nuestra Alianza de Willits.

Photo by Kerri Giggis

Cat Lee
Reporter
cat@willitsweekly.com

Bring your picnic blankets to Recreation Grove for a Cinco de Mayo celebration hosted by the Willits Elementary Charter School this Saturday, May 4, 1 to 5 pm.

Kara McClellan, director of Willits Elementary Charter School, says this "fun event" is in part a fundraiser in support of the school's Spanish program. Also it is a great opportunity for the school to partner with the Spanish-speaking businesses and community in Willits, she said.

Jackie Lopez, who has three children who attend WECS, is the "brain child" of this event, said McClellan. "She's in charge."

The event includes a salsa competition, and local restaurants are invited to compete. The salsas will be sampled and judged by the patrons.

Professional DJs from L.D.U Entertainment are donating their services and will be playing traditional Mexican music. Food and beverages will be available for purchase, and there will be a silent auction and a raffle.

This Cinco de Mayo event -- which is happening on May 4th -- is free to the public. Food and beverages will be available for purchase: "lots of delicious traditional Mexican food and aguas frescas." McClellan said the food is being prepared by a group of local women led by Graciela Botello, "a great supporter of our school." She said posole, tamales, and flan will be included in the offerings, among other Mexican dishes and desserts. Fresh horchatas and

aguas frescas also will be offered for sale. This is a family-friendly, no-alcohol event.

WECS students will be performing songs and dances that they have been working on in music class, including "De Colores" and Cielito Lindo."

McClellan explained that the WECS Spanish program is an immersion program in which all the kids study the language for a half hour each day, and then the teachers weave the language and related subjects into the other daily classes.

"We're doing our best to give building blocks," she said, "for them [the students] to be bi-lingual, bi-cultural, and bi-literate."

The students have been learning the history of Cinco de Mayo while preparing for this event, and McClellan made sure to clarify that Cinco de Mayo is a celebration to commemorate the Mexican Army's victory over France in the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. It is commonly thought to be a celebration of Mexico's Independence Day, but that is celebrated annually on September 16.

The first prize for Saturday's raffle is a two-night stay at the Diggerdoo Inn Bed and Breakfast in the heart of Mendocino village, walking distance to the bluffs. Second prize is 6 pounds of honey from Hopland Campo Vido sweete pure unprocessed bee honey from Campo Vida from Hopland. A spring garden basket, flower seeds, gloves and tools, etc. Raffle tickets are \$5, and the drawing will be at 4 pm.

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Classifieds & More

Quick ads and extra info

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GAVEL DOWN SALES, located at 1611 South Main Street, is open Wed through Sun, 10 am to 6 pm, and is accepting quality home furnishings for consignment. Contact Kapila at 707.459.1300.

Eckankar

AWAKEN TO the divine guidance always within you. You are invited to participate in an ongoing, spiritual discussion every 4th Tuesday at 7 pm at the Willits Library meeting room, 390 E. Commercial Street. Next meeting is Tuesday, May 28. Sponsored by: Eckankar. Experience the Light & Sound of God. Information? Call 972-2475.

Notice

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— “Not a Willy fan”

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Recipe | From the ovens of SugarKat Kitchen

Chocolate Chip Cookie Cake

with Chocolate Glaze

Easy to make and full of chocolate chunks and nuts--a treat reminiscent of everyone's favorite cookie.

- 2 1/2 cups dark chocolate chunks, chopped to bite size
- 1 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped
- 3 cups all purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups firmly packed light brown sugar
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 vanilla beans, split horizontally, seeds scraped out (OR 2 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract)
- 1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
- 1/3 cup all purpose flour for coating baking pan.

Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350 degrees F. Generously grease a 10-cup fluted tube pan; dust with 1/4 cup flour completely covering the inside surface. Knock out any remaining flour.

Mix chocolate chunks, walnuts and 2 tablespoons of flour in medium bowl. Set aside.

In another bowl sift remaining flour with baking soda, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

Using electric mixer, cream butter until light. Add brown sugar and beat until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time. Add vanilla bean seeds (or vanilla extract).

Mix in reserved flour ingredients alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with dry ingredients.

Remove bowl from mixer, add reserved chocolate chunk mixture and stir into batter by hand.

Spoon batter into prepared pan. Smooth top. Bake until cake is springy to touch and begins to pull away from sides, about 55 minutes. Cool for 15 minutes then invert onto rack, remove pan and cool cake completely.

For the chocolate glaze; melt over low heat, (or in a microwave on half power) 6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate with 2 Tablespoons butter. Add 2 Tablespoons corn syrup and 3 Tablespoons warmed milk into chocolate/butter mixture and mix until smooth. Slowly drizzle over cake and top with additional chopped toasted walnuts.

City Council ends Airport Commission

The Willits City Council voted unanimously Thursday to end the Willits Airport Commission.

Zack Cinek
Reporter
zack@willitsweekly.com

Plans to eventually do away with the commission, formed in 1960, had been in place and an airport manager was already hired last year.

“We are not saying ‘go away,’” Councilman Ron Orenstein said, “we are changing the paradigm.”

Council members and members of the airport commission who spoke at the meeting agreed the time to end was now.

Orenstein said the commission’s purpose was to provide expert advice and make recommendations to the city.

“I do not remember ever receiving any kind of recommendation from the airport commission,” Orenstein said.

The council and airport people present at the meeting showed support for the move that would end the commission May 1.

Richard Johnson, Brooktrails resident, pilot and a past commissioner supported ending the commission. “I feel it has used its usefulness up,” Johnson said.

Citizens once appointed to the volunteer commission obeyed requirements of the Brown Act for their conduct.

“I think every once in a while you need to shed a little government, it doesn’t know how to stop itself,” Councilman Bruce Burton said.

Mayor Holly Madrigal said she wanted to keep “volunteerism” alive at the airport. “I want to figure out ways to maintain that,” Madrigal said.

For Airport Manager Dan Ramsey, his duties of overseeing the airport see little change.

“My boss is the City and that is who I reported to all that time,” Ramsey said in an interview.

Ramsey said he will continue to listen to and communicate with former commissioners bringing situations or volunteer work to his attention.

A report from the city manager’s office states that matters requiring formal action would simply be placed on the regular City Council agenda.

TRUCKS, from Page 1

League game at the Commercial Street ball fields could be a violation.

“I can understand the logic behind this,” Councilman Ron Orenstein said. “I am wondering if maybe we permitted some kind of vending at the ball field on certain days, would that have an impact on local restaurants?”

City Attorney Jim Lance said food truck policy is being discussed around California.

“We need to be cautious with what type of law we want to establish,” Lance said.

Like the baseball fields, Willits Skate Park has no food nearby and is one location in town where a food truck could find business.

“John’s Place is the nearest place that would sell food,” Councilwoman Holly Madrigal said.

David Rupe owns Sweetwater Station at the southeast corner of San Francisco Avenue and Main Street. The property, Rupe said, is contaminated from an old gas station.

Rupe said he wants to make money from the property, but said he finds a fee for daily use to be too high for any takers.

“Everybody protects everybody, but nobody protects me; it is difficult,” Rupe said to the council.

One restaurant project, held up by language in the City of Willits code book, is a plan by Ardella’s to have a barbeque outside its building.

Ardella’s Lori Dorholt told the council she did not want to go ahead with plans that could then be stopped. Dorholt, in later talks with the city, has since received a green light to fire up the barbeque, she told Willits Weekly.

At a new location on Blosser Lane, Atansio U. Ramirez and Rosa Nuñez serve homemade burritos, tacos, enchiladas, tortas and more from their Taqueria Ramirez truck across from the Willits Redwood Company sawmill.

“This is my life. Selling tacos is my life,” Ramirez said to council members Wednesday night. Ramirez and Nuñez also cater events in the community.

“I came here because it is a small little town. I came here in 1968,” said Ramirez, who once ran a restaurant at Brown’s Corner.

At present, no food trucks do business on Main or Commercial streets. Main Street’s last truck at the north side of the old Scott’s Appliance building left Willits for Covelo.

Like a restaurant with four walls and a foundation, Taqueria Ramirez has a permit to sell food in the city. Ramirez would be happy to get closer to Main Street or even get another vehicle.

“For sure it is better to be on Main Street because more people are around,” Ramirez said, serving customers from his truck’s kitchen.

The Law: Willits Code Section 5.28.010: It is unlawful for any person to sell or offer for sale any merchandise of any description from either stationary or portable stands or from vehicles upon either Main or Commercial Streets, or upon any side street within one block distant from either main or commercial streets in the city.

CASEY, from Page 1

other Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart contestants instead.

Along with her parade riding and days in her youth spent gymkhanaing on her Uncle Mike’s roping horse Bud, this year Casey joined the California High School Rodeo Association and is having a great time.

Now on her grey gelding Blu, she is competing in team roping with partner Michael McKinnon and also in breakaway, and she is looking to do barrel events soon, too.

Casey is out selling tickets as of May 1st to the Willits Frontier Days events, and she encourages everyone to call or text her at 707-354-3996.

LILJA, from Page 1

Horsemanship runs deep in her Shuster family roots too; her grandmother Leslie (Cogburn) Scaglione and mother Lanae (Shuster) Lamkin both ran and won the sweetheart title, Leslie in 1966 and Lanae in 1991.

In the more recent past, Lilja has been enjoying riding her palomino gelding First Class Encounter at horse shows, as well as pleasure trail riding on her family’s beautiful farm in the valley. But she hopes to add “Queen Run” to her resume this year.

“It would be a big honor to be a part of the longest-continuous-running rodeo in California and to represent Willits Frontier Days as the 2013 Sweetheart, as well as be able to continue the family legacy and become a third-generation sweetheart,” said Lilja.

Lilja is out and about selling tickets to the Fourth of July events as of May 1st and is available by phone – “Call anytime!” – at 707-972-6793 or by emailing liljalamkin@yahoo.com.

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Directed by Bill Barksdale Produced by Lynn Dee Johnson

Starring: Karla McDonald Damian Sebouhian
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May 3-4, 9-12, 16-19

Fri/Sat 8:PM \$15

Thurs 7:PM \$10

Sun 2:PM \$10

Thurs. 5/9 Soroptimist's Benefit
Reception 6:15 PM \$15
Contains Adult Language

Willits Community Theatre
37 W. Van Ln, Willits, CA

Tickets at Good's Stamp Shoppe
56 So. Main St, Willits
For credit card orders, call 459-0895

Underwriters: Les Schwab Tire Center of Willits
Poster design: Creek Norris

WillitsTheatre.org



Willits Community Telephone Directory

The 2013 Soroptimist phone books featuring Willits phone listings and advertisements are out: if you haven't picked yours up yet, look for the stacks with the pretty yellow and blue cover at local businesses around town.

The Soroptimists had a cover art competition for the first time this year, and Heidi Deguzman won. Her cover features a beautiful swallowtail butterfly, birds and a flower.

"All the traditional things had been done," Deguzman said, so she came up with something "natural, something simple and sweet" that represents Willits.

Deguzman, who was born and raised in Ukiah, found out about the contest through

her good friend Lisa Epstein of State Farm in Willits. She created the cover artwork with Copic Markers. "I have 375 of them," she said. "They're alcohol based markers that blend really easily. It looks like watercolor, but it's pen. I find it really fun to use them." Check out more of Deguzman's work here: <http://heidideguzman.artistwebsites.com/index.html>

All profits from advertising in the annual Soroptimist phonebook go back into the community by funding scholarships or the club's many donations to community institutions and projects including the senior center, Willits Daily Bread and the library.

The group plans to hold another cover contest for the 2014 phone book cover.



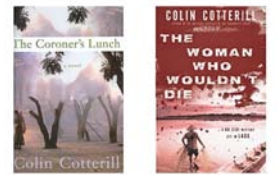
Summer Mysteries

Fran Resendez
Columnist

With warm weather just around the corner, I start to daydream about summer reading. I picture a tall stack of paperbacks, a tall glass of iced tea and a comfortable lounge chair out on the patio. Or, if I'm lucky, I might be lying on a towel at the beach. The critical factor is having a book that "takes me away" and a well-written mystery is always a good choice.

I'd like to recommend two authors who have written series worth owning and worth rereading, Colin Cotterill and Alan Bradley. Their main characters and settings could not be more different, but their stories are timeless, engrossing and fun.

Cotterill's main character is 72-year-old **Siri Paiboun**, a medical doctor educated in France and living in Laos in the '70s after the communist takeover. Comrade Siri is forced to become the country's only coroner. Without any training and a staff of two, the good doctor tackles his job with a curiosity for the truth and dream-like communications directly from the dead. I won't explain why they talk to him, you'll have to read the books! The series starts with *The Coroner's Lunch* and continues through nine titles, the latest being *The Woman Who Wouldn't Die*.



2008 to the present, and has performed with her string quartet at several private parties in the greater Willits area.

Bonnie plans to attend the University of California at Davis, where she has been accepted as a Regent Scholar. "I intend to take as many theatre classes as I can while in school and pursue a career in acting or become involved in community theatre after graduation," Smith said.

Bonnie Smith is the daughter of Heidi Gundlach and Peter Smith of Willits.

WHS Senior Bonnie Smith wins Brooks Darrow Scholarship

Willits High School senior Bonnie Smith has been awarded the Brooks Darrow Scholarship for 2013. The scholarship was given to Smith because of her dedication to theatre and because of her determination to follow a career in theatre after she graduates from college.

Although Smith performed in only one play on the Willits Community Theatre stage ("Lilies of the Field" in 2012, in which she played Sister Albertine), Smith has a long list of credits with Willits High School and with the Waldorf

School of Mendocino County, where she went to elementary school. She performed or was a crew member in eleven plays at Willits High, including "It's A Wonderful Life," "The Wizard of Oz," "Les Miserables," and "The Sound of Music."

At the Waldorf School, Smith performed in "A Christmas Carol," "As You Like It," "Robin Hood," "Joseph The Dreamer," and four other plays. She's also studied in the Ann McDonald vocal workshops, played violin for the Ukiah Symphony from



Obituary Stella James (1916 - 2013)

Longtime Sherwood Valley resident Stella James died Sunday, April 21, 2013, at her home. She was 97.

Stella was born March 12, 1916, in Alberta, Canada, to Herman Henry Steen and Elizabeth Huenergardt. Her family homesteaded in Oklahoma, North Dakota, and Alberta. They moved to the United States in 1923 and to the Willits area in 1928, settling on the Wheelbarrow Ranch north of Willits.

Stella was 17 when she married her husband, Edgar James, also a longtime resident of Willits, in 1933. They spent 51 years together, until his death in 1984. She was married to her second husband, Capt. Clifford Keith Gregor for 15 years.

She was a charter member of the Willits Horsemen's Association from 1947 to 2013, and

a member of the Grange for many years. She was queen of the Fortuna Rodeo, along with accomplishments too numerous to mention.

Stella was fond of saying she was "The last leaf on the tree." What a strong, green, vibrant leaf she was.

She was a true pioneer.

The family wishes to thank the many friends who cared for Stella over her long life. She thought of them as family, and we are grateful to them for making her life richer.

Services will be held at 11 am Thursday, May 2, at Agape Bible Church, 290 South Lenore Avenue.

Anker-Lucier Mortuary is handling arrangements.



Stella James in her home.

Photo by Josh Bowers

Kitty Norris given Lifetime Service Award

from Willits Community Theatre

Kitty Norris is the recipient of the Willits Community Theatre Lifetime Service Award for 2013. Norris has been with the theatre's board of directors since 2002. Since that time she has served as the board's treasurer and also as a member of the Artistic Direction Committee, a position she recently vacated after 10 years.

Quite possibly her most creative contribution to the theatre has been as the impresario of WCT's Guest Artist concert and dance series, which has offered the Playhouse's performance space to a long list of very talented professional musicians. Over the past three years, the concert series has brought several thousand dollars into WCT's coffers. In addition, Norris has been instrumental in driving the theatre, sometimes kicking and screaming, into the

digital age.

Besides pouring her creative fire into Willits Community Theatre, Norris is active in other artistic efforts. She is a member of Terpsichore, the small choral group that accepts only the finest voices in the area. She also is a member of a local dance troupe. It is not unusual to see Kitty in a flaming red, sequined and swirly dress dancing in the middle of West Van Lane during a Local First community celebration. Strangely, she has never appeared onstage in a WCT production. "I'd rather be in the audience, cheering and applauding: a much more important job," Norris said recently.

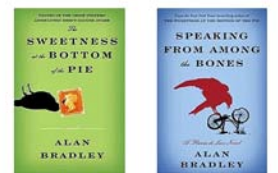
Thanks, Kitty, for your great work in helping to support and bring the arts to Willits!

From the desk of Lanny Cotler:
I bought this ad to support Willits Weekly, because I believe in its mission: to *better* inform our community about the ideas and issues that affect us profoundly.
As ClassWarFilms, I make radical videos that go to the roots of our social, political, and planetary reality. Through crowd-funding, I urgently seek your support.
Go to: www.tinyurl.com/d4pyza8

Dr. Siri is a delightful scientist with a wicked sense of humor and a great deal of energy for life, which is a parallel to Alan Bradley's 11-year-old heroine, **Flavia de Luce**. Flavia lives on her British family's decrepit country estate, rattling around her own wing of the mansion, which includes an ancestor's well-stocked chemistry lab. Flavia reveals herself to be a chemistry prodigy with an unusual fascination for poisons.

Her mother has mysteriously disappeared during a mountain-climbing expedition, her father survived World War II but hides away in his study with his stamp collection, and her two teenage sisters are always teasing Flavia unmercifully.

What's a girl to do but jump on Gladys, her bicycle, and try to solve local mysteries in the village? It all starts with *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* and continues through five titles, the latest being *Speaking From Among the Bones*. You'll want to read them all!



Whether you read electronically, on the paper page or listen to audio books, please utilize our library system and take advantage of our county's delightful local bookstores, both new and used.

ABOUT FRAN: Local poet, Fran Resendez, is retired from 20 years of bookselling at the former Leaves of Grass Books in Willits. Getting her first library card was one of the happiest days in her reading life.

WOMEN GONE WILD

Jane Futcher
Congratulations, Willits Weekly!
from womengonewildpress.com

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Sports

Year-round coverage for youth and adult games



Counter clockwise:

Umpire Tom Barbitta, and others gather to console the injured player from the Phillies, Sheldon Lund-Powers.

Pitcher for Braves, Keegan Reed.

Catcher for Braves, Keegan Reed, and batter, Tanner Golightly from the Giants, who is pool playing for the Phillies.

Two players meet at the base: they tried to throw the runner out, but the ball was lost in the haze. Batter from the Phillies, Sheldon Lund Powers and catcher for the Braves, Keegan Reed.

Photos by Kathy McKee



Let's Play Ball!

Willits Little League in full swing!
See the kids play this Saturday from 9 am to 4:30 pm
at the ball fields on Commercial Street



FIRE SEASON, from Page 1

April, this year is likely to go down as one of the driest ever.

The California Department of Water Resources' final snow pack survey of the year is starting this morning. The late March survey found water content in California's snow pack down to 52 percent of usual, but electronic sensors report water in the snowpack is now down to 21 percent of usual for this time of year, statewide, and 19 percent of usual in the northern Sierras / Trinity mountains.

This Saturday, May 4, from 11 am to 2 pm, the Mendocino Fire Safe Council is hosting a public forum on fire safety and preparedness at Cal Fire's Howard Forest Training Center at the top of the Ridgewood Grade. Mendocino National Forest Supervisor Sherry Tune will speak on a new program called "Fire Escape." Upcoming grant opportunities with the California Fire Safe Council will also be discussed.

For more information check www.firesafemendocino.org or contact De-Anne Hooper of the Fire Safe Council at 462-3662 or firesafe@pacific.net.

Cal Fire has increased its staffing in Southern California and moved airtankers to bases in the southern part of the state due to several recent unseasonably large wildfires threatening people and homes. "We are in the process of training our seasonal firefighters and monitoring weather conditions closely to determine our staffing levels," said Chief Ken Pimlott, director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. "While we are busy transitioning into fire season, this is the time we want residents to begin preparing their homes for fire season by creating 100 feet of defensible space."

Cal Fire is asking Californians to prepare for wildfires by taking these actions:

- Maintain 100 feet of Defensible Space
- Remove all dead plants, grass, and weeds from within 30 feet of your home
- Trim trees 6 feet from the ground
- Remove all leaves, pine needles and debris from roofs
- Create an Evacuation Plan in case of a wildfire

For more tips on preparing for a wildfire visit: www.ReadyForWildfire.org or www.fire.ca.gov. To keep up on area fires, bookmark Cal Fire's Current Fire Information page, http://cdfdata.fire.ca.gov/incidents/incidents_current, or check Cal Fire's Facebook page. In addition to the Yellow Fire in Sonoma County (125 acres and 50% contained. Full containment expected tomorrow morning) and the Silverado Fire in Napa County (75 acres - 60% contained), there are two newer fires in Butte County on the incident list as of midday Wednesday: the Panther Fire and the Cedar Fire.



Puzzle Answers

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

From Page 8

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

ARTS, from Page 1

A manager may be needed to oversee the process: "So we have a part-time person who really makes sure business is taken care of as this process moves along," Moore said.

Councilman Bruce Burton noted costs of administration and overhead if a Center for the Arts manager is hired.

"Then there is no way it is revenue neutral, not even close," said Burton.

Councilman Ron Orenstein said that art auctions have traditionally covered about half of the art center's costs. A Center for the Arts employee could be a boost for the gallery.

"The idea is that this person would generate more excitement and activity than has been going on at the arts center since its doors opened," Orenstein said.

Councilwoman Madge Strong and Burton both spoke on the burden volunteer board members carry from the Brown Act.

"For a committee that works from the heart and volunteers, what a wonderful idea to get out from under the Brown Act and form a non-profit," Strong said.

Councilman Larry Stranske said he wanted to know how long it would take for the Cultural Arts Center to become a non-profit. Through involvement in a Willits Garden Club project, Stranske said he has been trying to get a tree planted at the building.

"I have dealt in a real simple way with the Arts Commission, and in 2.5 years they cannot tell me where to plant a tree," Stranske said. "I do not have a lot of faith."

Directed by a committee or operated as a non-profit, the work of those serving the town's beloved Art Center may stay much the same.

"The challenge is there to keep a volunteer organization together," Burton said.

BROOKTRAILS, from Page 1

Phil Dow is executive director of the Mendocino Council of Governments, the joint powers authority for transportation for Mendocino County. MCOG distributes funding for local and regional transportation projects, and Dow has been a proponent of the Willits Bypass for decades.

The two issues brought a relatively large crowd of about 30 to the Tuesday, April 23 meeting at the Brooktrails Community Center.

Some members of the public appeared to be trying to persuade the board that it should not seek a binding opinion from the FPPC on the Orth matter, but that instead it should require Orth to recuse himself on bypass issues because, in the opinion of that group, it appears (to them) that Orth may have a conflict.

"Why should you take this out of the community?" asked Brooktrails resident Lanny Colter. "We are your community, right here in this room, not the FPPC." Colter's theme was repeated by several speakers.

Brooktrails Director Tim Ramming told the public that he felt it was appropriate to ask the FPPC for an opinion. Brooktrails Counsel Chris Neary assured both the board and the public that its opinions are binding and authoritative.

"The way I'd like to handle this is in a serious way," said Ramming. "I don't think you want us to weigh in on this. I think you want us to appeal to a rubric or a standard and have it be binding upon us. That's how you want us to resolve this."

Director Ralph Santos attempted to avoid protracted debate on the question of reconsideration of the March 26 Willits Bypass letter by making the motion to reconsider right away. "I've been here since 1978, and I know things should have been done a lot different than they have been, but basically there's a lot of people here and I know where they're coming from and I think if we're gonna do something like this, we need to consider everything that's out there," Santos said in making the motion.

Ramming told the public that he agreed that more public participation should have occurred on the March 26th Brooktrails meeting but that it did not. March 26th was the date of the four hour public testimony on the Willits Bypass that occurred at the board of supervisors' chambers in Ukiah. Although the issue was noticed on the Brooktrails agenda, only four or five people showed up to weigh in on the issue at the Brooktrails meeting and a letter in support of the bypass was approved unanimously.

The letter of support for the Willits bypass meeting will be reconsidered on May 14.



Community News

Heartwarming stories & local tidbits

Volunteers upgrade

WHS sports facilities

School facilities director Wayne Bashore, whose last day on the school district's payroll is May 6, is rounding up volunteers to work on projects at Willits High School this spring and summer.

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
jennifer@willitsweekly.com

Plumbing contractor Mike Trevey of Emtech and Billy Potter of Potter Plumbing & Mechanical joined Bashore at WHS weekend

before last to work on the irrigation system for the football field. "We moved the valves out of the field, so they're easier to repair," Bashore said. "Windsor Mills is donating materials, and Richard Huddle of Huddle Construction is building the cover for the new valves."

This weekend, Jim Schulz of Schulz Construction is pouring concrete to extend the batting cage to make it regulation length, 75 feet long. "Right now it's just set up for a pitching machine," Bashore said. The new batting cage will have a roof long enough to cover a pitcher's mound. Schulz Construction is doing the construction to put up the roof and pouring the concrete for free.

Funds from the school district's Ventura-Perez trust are being used to buy the materials.

Other work planned for this spring includes regrading the track, starting May 11. "We're going to get that done before graduation," Bashore said.

The crew will bring in about 500 yards of new track

materials - 1/3 cinder and 2/3s dirt - then rotovate the track, blend in the new materials, and roll it. "The cinder keeps it just a little soft," he said.

"We're going to get Bud Garman & Sons to do the grading and shaping, and we're still looking for donations for trucking to haul the material," Bashore said. Anyone who can help haul materials in to the site can call Bashore at 459-4498.

The volunteer crew also plans to redo the football field with new natural grass turf this summer, with materials also funded from the Ventura-Perez trust. Bashore says he expects the football field will be ready to play at the end of August.

Bashore's contract to oversee school bond facilities construction is up as of May 6, and in addition to continuing to organize and work on volunteer projects for the schools, he'll be back at work running his business, R. Wayne Bashore Construction (459-4498), doing residential and commercial construction and architectural drafting.



From left to right: plumbing contractor Mike Trevey of Emtech, school facilities director Wayne Bashore, and Billy Potter of Potter Plumbing & Mechanical upgrading the irrigation system at the Willits High School football field.

Photo | Willits Weekly/Jennifer Poole

Congratulations, Willits Weekly

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Testimonial Advertisement

1 WILLITS Local

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Mary Zellachild, a 30-year resident of Willits, has been using the Mendocino Transit Authority's services practically since she moved to the area. She relies heavily on MTA's Route #20 to travel between Willits and Ukiah to see her health care providers often during the year. She also rides MTA's C C Rider to travel to Santa Rosa where she transfers to Golden Gate Transit and from there to BART to travel to Walnut Creek to visit family and friends. "It is so consistent and runs every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas," she explains. "You can really count on it." Several years ago, Mary made one of those major lifestyle decisions to give up her car and move from the outskirts of town to downtown Willits.

Now Mary will either walk or use the new MTA service, 1 Willits Local. She loves having the expanded service back as she works from home in the morning and can use the 1 Willits Local to get to all the places she needs to go in the afternoon, like the Evergreen Shopping Center or the Senior Center Gift Shop. "I really appreciate MTA. It is so important to have a reliable local transportation system," she stresses. "I hope more people will get out of their cars and use the bus and they will see just how handy and economical it is. It goes just about every place in town," she concludes.

Fares:

Regular Fare \$1.25
Seniors 62+ \$.60
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Monthly Pass (one zone) \$31.00
16 Punch Pass \$15.00

Mendocino Transit Authority

www.MendocinoTransit.org
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Route 20 Willits to Ukiah 6 Round Trips, Monday-Friday 800-696-4MTA

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