



# What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

## My opinion

To the Editor:

I do not believe all the information in the letter from Chief Blaylock's attorney.

I was the Chief of Police of Willits PD and retired in March 2020. I was a police officer for 40 years, the last 12 for Willits PD. I have not spoken to anyone at the police department or the city about this. The only information I have specifically about this "claim" is what I have read on Facebook and the Willits Weekly newspaper. Also, I have never met Chief Blaylock.

I am not affiliated with the City of Willits and haven't been since March of 2020. With all that said, I will give you the highlights as to why I have the opinion I do.

- The prior chief (interim) to Blaylock was black. He didn't seem to have any problems.

- Willits PD has had a black officer for several years.

- Although the chief of police is in charge of the department, he/she answers to the city manager. During the years I was the chief of police, the city manager was a woman. The lieutenant and sergeants interacted with her regularly as she was our boss.

- The HR director (and the only member of the HR Department) is very upstanding (and outspoken) and would not allow what is reported, as it would violate her principles and everything she and the city stand for.

- The then-city manager also would not allow what is purported to have happened. She took all violations seriously. Incidentally, her husband is Black.

- The State of California regulates every peace officer and public safety dispatcher's hiring and training. Thorough backgrounds are mandated and have to cover certain entities. Ninety percent of California citizens would not be able to pass these backgrounds to be hired as police officers. One of the areas covered in the background is prejudice, racial and otherwise.

In addition to all the people that are favorable to the applicant, people who do not like the applicant are interviewed and asked explicitly about racial (gender, etc.) bias.

A polygraph is given to the applicant and includes questions regarding racial (gender, etc.) bias. A psychological examination is conducted by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist. Included in that examination is an evaluation of racial (gender, etc.) bias.

It is my opinion that a true leader would not have just quit, but would work to fix the problems and, if indeed, told to do things illegal or immoral would refuse, and document them.

Scott Warnock,  
former WPD chief

## Thank you

To the Editor:

I want to thank you very much for printing the letter from [former Willits police chief Alexis] Blaylock's attorney. Being able to be transparent and aware of problem areas allows us to find solutions.

I have hope that we can make positive changes. Ms. Blaylock sounds like a courageous woman who is encouraging us to work on the problems.

I look forward to reading your paper each week.

Pat Cougar, Willits

## Troubling

To the Editor:

It was troubling to read a long, one-sided letter from an attorney representing our former police chief, accusing City of Willits employees of poor behavior, and threatening legal action against the city unless we pay a half-million dollars to the former chief and the attorney.

It is doubly troubling because, I've been told, the accused people cannot speak publicly, bound by state laws regarding what they can and cannot say. All we have is a very public accusation against members of our community, printed for everyone to read, and no way for them to respond.

I hope our city council will deny this demand for \$500,000, and speak out on behalf of the accused Willits people who are not permitted to defend their integrity against these vicious accusations.

B. B. Kamoroff, Willits

## Cannabis Alliance committee nominations open

Submitted by Mendocino Cannabis Alliance

The Mendocino Cannabis Alliance is thrilled to announce the opening of the nomination period for the MCA Policy Committee elections. Nominations opened Monday, February 15 and remain open for 10 days, until midnight on Wednesday, February 24. There are seven seats available to be filled in this election. The MCA Policy Committee is a 13-person body consisting of six members appointed by the MCA Board of Directors and seven members elected by the MCA's membership.

Only MCA members can nominate, or be nominated, in this Policy Committee election. Members may nominate themselves and are encouraged to do so! Anyone in the Mendocino cannabis community who is not yet an MCA member but would like to run for an available seat is invited to join MCA at [www.MendoCannabis.com/join](http://www.MendoCannabis.com/join).

Each year, the Policy Committee prepares and presents an Annual Strategic Policy Plan to the board of directors for adoption. This adopted plan guides MCA's advocacy throughout the year, and the Policy Committee has the authority to author specific policy positions and draft release memos to support the priorities and objectives of MCA's policy platform.

The MCA Board of Directors has established that the Policy Committee should include broad sectoral representation from throughout the supply chain. The committee is mandated to include a minimum of one licensee who holds a Cottage OR Specialty Cottage, Outdoor or ML Tier 1 to ensure inclusion of the essential perspective they provide. All MCA members are encouraged to consider participating.

The required time commitment for participation on the Policy Committee is five to seven hours a week minimum. This includes up to two 90-minute meetings per week, up to 2 hours of reading, commenting and correspondence per week, with the potential for additional subcommittee work.

All Policy Committee members must sign an acceptance letter and the MCA Nondisclosure Agreement prior to being seated. Both can be found by clicking this link: <http://bit.ly/mca-pc-docs>.

Nomination forms can be found at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeBzJbU5YOeOK3agTmL45y7r\\_rDI\\_4oCzP6c0-yCPGzL1z36g/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeBzJbU5YOeOK3agTmL45y7r_rDI_4oCzP6c0-yCPGzL1z36g/viewform).

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Michael Katz at 707-234-5568 or email [info@mendocannabis.com](mailto:info@mendocannabis.com).

The Mendocino Cannabis Alliance serves and promotes Mendocino County's world-renowned cannabis cultivators and businesses through sustainable economic development, education, and public policy initiatives.

## Willits Senior Center Lunch

### Drive-Thru & Walk-Up Meals

The Willits Senior Center is continuing to provide drive-thru, walk-up and delivered meals, although the dining room is closed. Prices for drive-thru and walk-up To Go lunches will remain at \$5 through June 2021, thanks to funding from the Community Foundation and Sparetime Supply. Meals on Wheels delivered meals remain at \$5.50. Call 459-6826 for more info.

Drive-thru and walk-up To Go meals are available 12 to 1 pm, Monday through Friday. Pickup is outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtlet Road.

### Home Meal Delivery

The Senior Center Meals on Wheels delivered meals are \$5.50 per meal. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery; Monday through Friday. Delivered throughout Willits.

**Thursday, February 18:** Chicken Pesto Pasta, Green Salad, Garlic Bread

**Friday, February 19:** Chili Rellenos Casserole, Rice, Beans

**Monday, February 22:** Tuna Casserole, Veggie, Roll

**Tuesday, February 23:** Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce, Veggie, Garlic Bread, Green Salad

**Wednesday, February 24:** BBQ Chicken, Beans, Cornbread, Coleslaw

**Thursday, February 25:** Beef Stew, Veggie, Roll, Green Salad

**Friday, February 26:** Turkey w/Gravy, Stuffing, Cranberry Sauce, Veggie

Transportation for seniors: Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments.

## COVID-19 case breakdown by zip code

Mendocino County Public Health's active COVID-19 case data broken down by zip code. Data as of February 16. To see daily updates, visit [www.mendocinocounty.org/community/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-case-data](http://www.mendocinocounty.org/community/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-case-data)

### Zip Code / City / Case Count

95410	Albion	0-5
95415	Boonville	0-5
95428	Covelo	34
95437	Fort Bragg	17
95449	Hopland	0-5
95454	Laytonville	0-5
95460	Mendocino	0-5
95466	Philo	0-5
95468	Point Arena	0-5
95470	Redwood Valley	6
95481	Talmage	0-5
95482	Ukiah	90
95490	Willits	14
95494	Yorkville	0-5

Total Mendocino County: 178

## Seed sharing at the Grange, February 20

Submitted by Little Lake Grange

The Little Lake Grange and the Mendocino County Pomona Grange co-sponsor "Seed Sharing: Keeping Heirloom Seeds in Our Gardens & on Our Tables," on Saturday, February 20, at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street in Willits.

The event is set for 12 to 3 pm behind the Grange. Park in front and walk through. Masks mandatory. Bring small envelopes if you have some. Call or text 707-889-2449 for information about participating, including table space to display seeds to share. Seeds will be available from seed banks and many local gardens.

"Our mission is to conserve and promote America's

culturally diverse and endangered garden and food crops for future generations, and to share heritage, open pollinated heirloom seeds and plants with all.

"We encourage all local gardeners to participate by requesting seeds from others and offering seeds they've saved from their own gardens. We want to teach and advise with proper seed saving for germination and success, as well as an understanding of what plants can be best saved and shared or replanted successfully by beginners."

Call your local Grange to participate by sharing seeds, with table space to display.



At top, from left: Volunteer Rita Santos is ready to pass out eggs. Volunteers bag the carrots into smaller containers. Cathy Lawrence prepares to distribute milk to the recipients.

At left, below: The cars form two lines this week in order to effect a more orderly and efficient flow.

Below: Richard Tootreesse Jeske helps load the commodities into the back of an SUV.

At bottom: Linda Lee Henry comes every two weeks for commodities to help her get through the pandemic.



Photos by Mathew Caine

# Helping Hand

## 300 Willits families get by with a little help from the Redwood Empire Food Bank bi-weekly distribution

"This is a blessing," beamed Rosie Holland. "With all this virus stuff going on, it's really helped us a lot. We go to the senior and the first-of-the-month distribution. I get food for the whole family of four. I bring my daughters down at the first of the month. They have three and four kids each. I get here at seven in the morning. I wait 2 1/2 hours, but it's worth it."

On a cool but clear blue morning, February 16, several volunteers and employees of the Redwood Empire Food Bank gathered to organize, stack, bag and distribute their twice-monthly commodities to grateful recipients – those hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic or just needing some help to feed their families due to a myriad of reasons.

"I've been to several of these," said LucyLee Henry. "I come for the seniors' day and the first Tuesday as well. This really helps out. I also pick up for two other friends who are not able to get down here. One is in a wheelchair, an amputee. I take it to his house and he really appreciates it, especially last time when it was right after the power outages and all of his food had spoiled. This is a great thing. It is so well organized. Usually, they try to hand out the food around 9:30. I've been here since 7 am. I don't mind waiting because I can sit and relax, listen to my radio."

The organizers, Redwood Empire Food Bank Program Coordinator Raquel Curiel Morales and Regional Coordinator Luis Avila Cruz, ran the altruistic event like clockwork. All motions, set-ups, and the dozen or so volunteers worked together to create a smooth, seamless flow of food and information.

Curiel Morales has been with the food bank as a full-time employee since July. "I love this," she said, "I love being out here with the people. The best part of this job is not having to say 'no' to anybody. If you need food, if you want food, come and get it because we don't turn anybody away. We just want this food to get out there. We know that times are tough right now."

Although some of the recipients of the foods have, in the past, been wary of the giveaway, they have, over time, become comfortable with the process and the organization. "We ask very minimal questions," explained Curiel Morales. "There has been fear in the community that Redwood Food Bank shares information about the recipients. We don't share any information nor do we sell our information. We take names, addresses, phone numbers so that we can

have some demographics about how many people are coming to the locations, how far they're driving to get the food, so that we know what communities need."

Four lines of cars waited in the parking lot of the soccer fields, backed up single-file past the museum to the library. A volunteer helped to move the cars along in an orderly manner. Near the front of the line, a volunteer with a computer and scanning device made sure of the needs of the families, scanning and handing out color-coded tickets to place on the windshield wipers of the cars. That way the workers farther down the lines could determine what commodities were required without slowing down the queue.

As the cars were directed single-file past Zoe Bigelow, from Listos and Sherwood Firewise, they were given literature about the "Five Steps to Disaster Preparedness." They were asked to please open their windows as to vent the car prior to encountering the volunteers who would load the food, and to have their masks in place, not to smoke or be on their cellphones.

After this, the vehicles were directed to one of two lines which went past the pop-up tents with the food, stopping at various stations to have the volunteers bring the goods and load the cars, depending on which tickets were on their windshields.

"Some of what we give out are donated items," explained Curiel Morales. "This week we have diapers that were donated in bulk, so we can get that out to the community. The boxes that have the yellow tag are our GtoG (groceries to go) which has dry food, staple food that can be shelved for a little while. It can be canned food, pastas, etc. We also provide different produce, vegetables, and things like that. Much of the produce is donated directly from the farmers, some we purchase, some are donated by stores like Costco, Safeway, Raley's. We always make sure that there is some kind of protein, a lot of which comes from the USDA. Today we have hams."

The Redwood Empire Food Bank distribution is in Willits on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. The third Tuesday has been reserved for seniors in the past, however, the food bank wanted to get out as much food as possible to those who need it and have opened up the third Tuesday to all, with special dietary choices reserved for the seniors.

The Willits distribution feeds approximately 300 families.



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At top: Zoe Bigelow passes out literature for Listos and Sherwood Firewise, and reminds the recipients to turn off phones, wear masks, and keep their windows open.

Above: Boxes of commodities await the seniors who will be driving through the line.

Below, left: The Redwood Empire Food Bank truck brings all the food and commodities for distribution.

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

Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred. Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

**Willits Weekly**

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## Signs of Spring

Mendo Lake Food Hub delivers local, farm-fresh produce to your door

It's such a delight on a beautiful, sunny winter's day to get a box full of just-harvested delicious Mendo Lake Food Hub produce delivered to your front door.

**Jennifer Poole**  
Editor & Reporter  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

With spring approaching, the Food Hub is now offering \$35 mixed-produce boxes again, all produce certified organic and / or Mendocino Renegade Certified. This week's box included:

- Leeks – Riverdog Farm
- Butter lettuce – New Agrarian Collective
- Napa or Savoy cabbage – Riverdog / Sunatcher Farm
- Butternut squash – Terra Firma Farm
- Carrots – Big Mesa Farm
- Beets – Big Mesa Farm
- Hakurei turnips, loose – Cinnamon Bear Farm
- Kale – Big Mesa Farm
- Cilantro – Big Mesa Farm
- Washington navel oranges – Spreading Farm

Extras ordered this week included fabulous Meyer lemons, massive Oro Blanco grapefruit, Lovers Lane honey from Ukiah, Stella Cadente Extra-Virgin Olive Oil, easy-peel Minneola tangelos, and pastured eggs from Rhizing Ground Farm in Caspar.

Mendo Lake Food Hub started with a mission to connect farmers in Lake and Mendocino counties with wholesale buyers – providing access to a shared sales and distribution network for wholesale buyers like grocery stores, schools and restaurants. So a number of the offerings come in wholesale sizes, like a 25-pound box of chiggiya beets or a 12-bunch bag of French breakfast radishes.

But "in response to an outpouring of consumer need and interest" in direct food deliveries, especially due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Food Hub started selling to and delivering to individuals. In addition to the mixed-produce boxes suitable for family use, the Food Hub also sells retail-sized items like a 1-pound bag of lemons, one bunch of kale, or a clamshell of pea or sunflower shoots.

Delivery is available in the greater Ukiah area and in Willits to addresses within 2 miles of the highway on well-maintained roads. Contact them about other delivery options, including pickups in town, at [orders@mendolakefoodhub.com](mailto:orders@mendolakefoodhub.com).

Shopping at Mendo Lake Food Hub requires a little planning: the online store at <https://mendolake.localfoodmarketplace.com> is "open" for orders twice a week: from 8 am Sundays through 7 am on Mondays, for Tuesday delivery; and from 8 am on Wednesday through 7 am on Thursday, for Friday delivery.

You can visit the website anytime, however, to get a general idea of what's regularly offered – including many varieties of Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese from Willits, specialty-farmed mushrooms from Gourmet Mushrooms in Sebastopol, grains and legumes from the Mendocino Grain Project, and a wide variety of offerings from Ocean Harvest Sea Vegetable Company.

Questions? Email [orders@mendolakefoodhub.com](mailto:orders@mendolakefoodhub.com) or call 707-467-3238.

Photos by Jennifer Poole



Above, left: The Farm to Family greenhouse roof collapsed due to heavy snow.

Photo by Cathy Brown

Above, right: The metal bracing inside the greenhouse is bent from the heavy snow that fell on January 26. At left: Cathy Brown stands inside the damaged greenhouse. At left, bottom: Much of what is grown on Farm to Family is in raised pots. Below, left: Farm to Family is totally off the grid, set up with solar arrays which produce only enough energy to keep the fans moving. Below, right: Cathy Brown stands in front of one of the sections of fence that requires repair to keep the produce safe from animals. At bottom, left: Signs used on the farm stand. At bottom, right: Outdoor crops are doing well but are exposed to animals that can enter via the broken fence.

## Storm Damage

Farm to Family asks for help repairing collapsed greenhouse roof and fence line in order to keep growing organic produce

"Our microclimate only gives us a four-month growing season," explained Cathy Brown, who, along with her husband, Bill, owns and operates the organic produce farm, Farm to Family, although it is mostly her project. "We depend on our greenhouse to extend our season to eight months." The devastating freak snow storm of January 26, 2021, with eight inches of heavy, wet snow and 70 mph winds, destroyed the roof to the greenhouse and tore down trees which crashed down on the perimeter fence.

**Mathew Caine**  
Features Writer  
[mathew@mwillitsweekly.com](mailto:mathew@mwillitsweekly.com)

Farm to Family is Read the rest of **Damage** Over on Page 9



Photos by Mathew Caine



Photos by Cassie Hulbert

## Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation reports death of 'the great white stag'

The Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation posted some sad news on Facebook on February 10, for those who enjoy seeing the white deer at Ridgewood Ranch on the grade between Willits and Ukiah.

"In memory of the great white stag at Ridgewood Ranch, who sadly passed away last week, I share these pictures of him and his herd," the post reports.

"Please know that even though we have lost a magnificent animal, there are still

more bucks on the ranch. I spotted a young buck nursing on his mom just last spring and the pictures are here. There should be a healthy batch of fawns this spring.

"Photos were taken by Melissa Fischbach, Matt Holzhauser, Roni McFadden, and Cassie Hulbert."

To see all the photos Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation posted, visit [www.facebook.com/seabiscuitheritagefoundation/posts/10157426170387105](http://www.facebook.com/seabiscuitheritagefoundation/posts/10157426170387105).



## SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS

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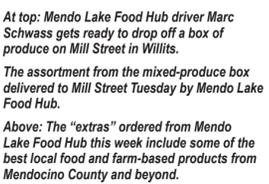
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**St. John Lutheran Church**  
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If you want to be included in this column please call:  
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At right, top row: Broadseed poppies, sown in place from fall through March, are one of the joys of spring, and produce lots of easily harvested edible seeds. Overwintered perennial arugula is already salad-size in my garden – seeds planted outdoors will not be ready until later (perennial arugula is available on Quail Seeds racks at Sparetime Supply and Willits Garden Supply). This year's hot new item is the "Gardener's Sweetheart" tomato – a heart-shaped cherry with sweet flavor.



Photo by Andrew Still  
Turnips and Asian greens are the same species as spring raab, Brassica rapa, which is called rapini in Italy – all three make flowering stalks eaten like broccoli in early spring that are delicious with pasta or as a salad with oil and lemon.

Bottom row: Lettuce – like this "Hungarian Pink Winter" in Lisa Von Schlegel's garden in Willits – is one of the best early spring vegetables and is available on Quail Seeds racks or online. Known as Godetia in the nursery trade, our own Farewell-to-Spring will bloom much longer in the garden than it does in the wild. Collards – as seen in this photo taken on February 15 – are one of the hardy biennial crops that overwinter easily here. All the fuss with starting seeds indoors is worth it when you can grow something like this "Myona" tomato, a favorite Bountiful Gardens variety that is available at Quail Seeds this year.

Photos by Jamie Chevalier

COLUMN | Garden Tip of the Month

# February: Waking things up

February marks a new season in the garden. Instead of shutting down more and more, the world is moving toward new growth. This is the time to plant or prune trees and shrubs before they come out of dormancy and start to grow.

Jamie Chevalier  
Columnist

What are growing now are mostly perennials, bulbs or biennials – established plants that have stored-up energy from last year to draw on. Kale, carrots, daffodils, onions, beets, fuchsias, mullein and asparagus are all getting ready to make a flower stalk, bloom, and set seed before summer. The trick is to get some new seeds started and producing by the time they all quit.

The gardener has three very different kinds of seeds available this time of year, with three very different life cycles. Most of the seed-starting information out there lists plants one by one. For most of us, all that detail quickly blurs into a mountain of confusing instructions and fussy details. Instead, let's look at the patterns, so you can go beyond those you already know and get more use from the land available to you.

In our gardens, climates from around the globe collide. Our beloved tomatoes and peppers (tropical perennials we grow as summer annuals) need a long, frost-free season. We start these indoors from February until April, for transplant in May or June. We make artificial tropics with grow lights, heat mats, and indoor sowing. We water them all summer to reproduce the summer rain of their homelands.

Outdoors, it's the exact opposite. With our wet winters and dry summers, the only times when seeds can reliably sprout and grow to maturity on their own are fall through spring. If you want California wildflowers like poppies, lupine, or Baby Blue Eyes, plant them now!

Italy, Spain, and the Middle East have the same pattern. Mediterranean annuals – like lettuce, peas, spinach,

mustard, poppies, turnips, barley and wheat – are hardwired for cool, moist, spring soil. They will sprout as soon as the soil hits 40 degrees, and grow quickly while there is still rain. By irrigating and selective breeding, we've prolonged their season, but none of these are really summer plants.

Those of us who want to be prepared for a future with less electricity, less water, and less plastic would do well to learn how to grow and store wheat, peas, garbanzos, barley, favas, mustards, scallions, endives, and other traditional winter / spring crops.

Both these types of vegetables are familiar to anyone who gardens. After centuries as farm crops, they sprout and grow quickly when planted. To grow more kinds of things, and use more niches on your land, you need different seed-starting skills. You need to work with wilder seeds.

A shady corner under fruit trees is no place for annual vegetables, but it could host many shade-loving perennials that are beautiful and useful: lemon balm for tea; wild strawberries; Good King Henry (a perennial vegetable); self-heal and skullcap (flowering medicinal herbs); currant bushes or berries. All of them are from temperate climates with cold winters, and all of them need cold-conditioning before they will sprout.

Just like trees and perennials, seeds can go dormant, (which means "sleep"). Besides tropical seeds and cool-season annual seeds, there is a third kind – seeds that need to sleep in cold, moist soil for up to three months before spring wakes them. They sprout when the soil warms up, but if you plant them in warm soil, they won't sprout. Where they come from, a seed that sprouts as soon as it ripens in summer will be doomed – the young plant wouldn't survive freezing. So they have developed coatings that keep them from sprouting until they have experienced winter and then spring. Sitting out the winter in a seed packet doesn't count – they have to be in moist soil.

I encourage you to explore the world of perennial flowers, herbs, vegetables, berries, and even trees that you can grow from seed once you know about cold-conditioning (aka stratification). You can plant them now in pots outdoors, or you can give them an artificial winter in a bag of soil in the fridge. Herbs like lavender, nettle, and echinacea, popular flowers like hibiscus and rudbeckia, fruit like blueberry, mulberry, and hardy kiwi are all available cheaply as seed, as long as you know how to wake them up.

Jamie Chevalier lives and gardens near Willits. She has gardened professionally in Alaska and California and taught gardening in schools. She spends some of her time living in a remote cabin and participates in commercial fishing. She wrote the Bountiful Gardens catalog from 2009 to 2017, and is now the proprietor of Quail Seeds, www.quailseeds.com.

OBITUARY |

# James Eaglin

James "Jim" Emmett Eaglin of Willits passed away December 28, 2020 at the age of 85. Born January 19, 1935 to James Marion Eaglin and Adelle Ann Eaglin in Petaluma, CA, he married Nancy Jean English on January 25, 1959 in Arbuckle, CA.



Eaglin was a respected and appreciated teacher at our Willits High School for 39 years, and a former member of the Willits Lions Club. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping, and everything outdoors, including all sports as he was a great athlete. Eaglin also enjoyed traveling with his RV group. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather that loved sharing time with family.

Eaglin is survived by sons, Jimmy, Jeff and Mark; daughter, Jill; grandchildren, Sarah, Laura, Kayla, Brenna and Seth; and great-grandchildren, Lexi, Leah, Kayla and Asher.

Memorial contributions may be made in Eaglin's name to the Willits High School athletic department. Due to COVID, there will be no services. Arrangements under the care and direction of Anker-Lucier Mortuary.



## Current Job Openings:

- Corrections Deputy
- Custodian
- Deputy Probation Officer I/II
- Screener
- Senior Program Specialist
- Social Worker Assistant II
- Social Worker I/II/III/IV A-D
- Social Worker Supervisor I/II A-C
- Staff Assistant II

For a complete list of current job openings and to apply:  
[www.mendocinocounty.org/government/human-resources](http://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/human-resources)  
EOE

# LEGAL NOTICES

WW306  
**Fictitious Business Name Statement**  
2021-F0035  
The following persons are doing business as The Woodrose, 1540 South Main Street, Willits, CA 95490.  
Registered owners: Dipchand Shah and Varsha Shah, 1119 South Main Street, Willits, CA 95490.  
This business is conducted by a general partnership.  
The registrants commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.  
FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on January 28, 2021.  
/s/ Dipchand Shah  
Publication dates: 02/11, 02/18, 02/25 and 03/04/2021

**Willits Weekly can run your legal notices including fictitious business name statements, foreclosure notices, storage unit auctions, and much more.**  
**Contact us for more information at willitsweekly@gmail.com**

WW309  
**Fictitious Business Name Statement**  
2021-F0058  
The following person is doing business as Happy Woman Jewelry, 308 Jones Street, Ukiah, CA 95437.  
Registered owner: Kevin Greer Minard, 31000 Camp One Ten Mile Road #C, Fort Bragg, CA 95437.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.  
FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 4, 2021.  
/s/ Kevin Minard  
Publication dates: 2/18, 2/25, 3/04 and 3/11/2021

WW302  
**Fictitious Business Name Statement**  
2021-F0021  
The following company is doing business as Happy Woman Jewelry, 308 Jones Street, Ukiah, CA 95437.  
Registered owner: Laura Buckner, 308 Jones Street, Ukiah, CA 95437.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on January 13, 2020.  
FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on January 13, 2021.  
/s/ Laura Buckner  
Publication dates: 01/28, 02/04, 02/11, 02/18, 2021

WW308  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Willits will conduct a public hearing, on February 24, 2021, at 6:30 P.M. to discuss future applications for funding under the CARES Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) program and to solicit citizen input on possible activities to be included in future CDBG-CV applications. After discussion, the City Council shall consider adoption of a resolution approving application for funding and the execution of grant agreement and amendments thereto from the Community Development Block Grant Program - Coronavirus Response Round 2 and 3 (CDBG-CV 2 & 3) Funding NOFA Dated December 18, 2020 as well as possible carryover funds from the Coronavirus Round 1 (CDBG-CV 1). Said application will be for an amount not to exceed \$358,431 to provide small business financial assistance to city businesses to help mitigate impacts of the COVID-19 economic downturn. Eligible activities paid for with State CDBG-CV funds must benefit low and moderate-income households and provide assistance to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of the public hearing is to give citizens an opportunity to make their comments known regarding what types of eligible activities the City of Willits should apply for in the next available and additional future opportunities under the State CDBG-CV program as well as comment on the proposed funding application. In order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the City of Willits is currently conducting public meetings pursuant to the provisions of the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, which suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act and the way the public can participate during the public meetings. Participation in the public meeting will be allowed pursuant to applicable Executive Orders at the time of the public meeting. Participation is expected to be through electronic means as posted on the City Council meeting agenda for the February 24, 2021 regular meeting. This allows the City to adhere to social distancing requirements, follow the Governors' Executive Order N-29-20 and provide a way for the public to provide public comment live during the meeting. HOW TO PARTICIPATE: The City of Willits encourages all interested parties to participate in the Public Hearing and to comment on the issues being discussed. Members of the public may participate and provide public comment as follows: • Written public comments regarding the proposed project may be submitted by email to Dusty Duley, dduley@cityofwillits.org or the City Clerk's office, 111 East Commercial Street, Willits, California, 95490, no later than 5:30 p.m., on Tuesday, February 23, 2021. All public comments received will be provided to the Council and uploaded to the City's website in advance of the meeting. • Oral public comments may be presented to the Willits City Council via teleconference during the public hearing. To address the Council during the live meeting please find the meeting-specific link to the teleconference included on the agenda for the February 24, 2021 City Council meeting that will be posted on the City's website. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the public meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (707) 459-4601. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will assist staff in assuring that reasonable accommodations are made to provide accessibility to the meeting. /s/ Dusty Duley  
Community Development Director  
Posted 02/11/21  
Publication Date: February 18, 2021

# CLASSIFIEDS

**Computer Help**  
Need help with your computer? PC, Macintosh, Android and IOS devices. Repairs, configuration and tutoring: \$50/hr. Call Liam 459-2470 or email uicearhail@gmail.com

**Freezer Empty? We can help!**  
Due to health concerns in Mendocino County, John Ford Ranch will be taking meat box orders (not individual package orders) for pick-up: Rancher's Choice Box - 50 pounds; steaks, roasts, and ground beef. Still \$325 (\$6.50 per pound). Hamburger Box: 25 pound box of hamburger in 1 or 1.5 pound packages: \$150. Natural ranch-raised grass fed beef, no hormones or antibiotics. Call 459-5193 to arrange pick-up. Leave a message, and we'll call back.

**RV/Trailer Space for Rent**  
Space for RV's and Trailers \$425 per month, includes water & garbage. Close to Safeway in Willits. Call Tony (707) 510-5895. See at "http://www.oakvine.net/tp"

**Stay Safe**  
I'll be back to help you with your Alterations and Sewing Needs when it is safe to do so.  
Barbara the Seamstress

**Willits Food Bank Open**  
Willits Community Services & Food Bank continues to distribute food, following COVID-19 safety provisions, to hungry families and individuals in the Willits area, with an increase in numbers served. The front office at 229 E San Francisco Ave is closed to the public, but the back door area is open for food distribution on Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 to 4:30 pm. Info: 459-3333; financial donations to WCS can be mailed to 229 E. San Francisco, Willits CA 95490.

**Help Wanted**  
Willits Weekly needs another part-time news reporter. News training or experience preferred, but not required. Hours are flexible depending on interest. Email a note or a resume to willitsweekly@gmail.com.

[www.WillitsWeekly.com](http://www.WillitsWeekly.com)

The rest of **Damage** | From Page 7

Main Street off Highway 20, Fort Bragg Road. Another mile or so up the well-maintained dirt drive, one can find the house, with another muddy eighth-of-a-mile slog up a steep road to the gardens.  
"I started farming in 2014 mostly as a hobby," said Brown. "I started selling my extra produce to Mariposa Market. I filled the FEMA relief boxes with my produce last summer. They were a lifesaver for me last year because there were so many restaurants closing down, not just from COVID but they started closing in 2019," said Brown, who began selling to restaurants in 2017. "I was selling to Crush in Ukiah, which was my biggest client, but I also sold to other restaurants, some that are no longer operating. I lost some of my accounts to larger corporate organic supply companies."

Even without the damage to the greenhouse, it is a struggle to make a profit with a small organic farm. Brown's goods are certified organic by the CCOF, California Certified Organic Farmers.

"The greenhouse is basically my lifeline to extending my season so I can participate in the Food Hub, which is totally amazing," Brown went on. "But I can't do that with the greenhouse roof destroyed in the storm. To get the roof fixed, it will be \$4,000, but to rebuild it with stabilized framing so it will make it through another snow storm would be twice that much. We're considering doing an upcycling with the metal that is inside to reinforce the framing."

"We're trying to vertically integrate our homestead into a self-sustaining business," she explained. "The produce farm is a big chunk of that. All of these things that Bill built for me in the greenhouse were upcycled from his contracting jobs. We used a lot of scrap materials that we had collected over the years. We're really into upcycling and trying to make as little impact on the environment as possible."

In order to rebuild their vital greenhouse, Brown started a GoFundMe campaign. "My GoFundMe is for \$7,000, which includes the fencing. Each post costs about \$200. We need six to 10 posts. It adds up. The solar fans we use in the greenhouse are \$90. They help keep the air circulating and the temperature cooler in the greenhouse."

Currently, the Browns have been able to raise a little over \$3,600. For anyone who would like to help out a local, organic sustainable farm, the GoFundMe is at: [gf.me/uzh483](http://gf.me/uzh483). A video with a tour of the destruction is at: [https://youtu.be/2XJblo2\\_0YE](https://youtu.be/2XJblo2_0YE).

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WW307  
**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
Filed February 4, 2021  
CASE NUMBER SCUKCVPT 21-75071  
ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:  
Petitioner **Antonio Ramirez Madrigal**, aka Antonie Ramirez Madrigal filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
**Antonio Ramirez Madrigal to Tony Madrigal**  
**Antonie Ramirez Madrigal to Tony Madrigal**  
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.  
NOTICE OF HEARING  
Date: **March 19, 2021, Time: 9:30 a.m., Dept. E**  
Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino  
100 North State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482  
Date: 02/04/21  
Publication Dates: February 18, 25, March 4, 11, 2021

**Willits Weekly** WW

WILLITS WEEKLY CROSSWORD  
Across  
1. A type of fruit (5)  
4. A type of tree (5)  
7. A type of berry (5)  
8. A type of sleeve (5)  
Down  
2. A type of tree (5)  
3. A type of berry (5)  
6. A type of sleeve (5)  
9. A type of tree (5)  
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9. A type of tree (5)  
10. A type of berry (5)  
11. A type of sleeve (5)



OBITUARY |

# Ron Moorhead

Ronald Clair Moorhead, 72, of Willits, California, peacefully passed away on Thursday, February 4 in the comfort of his home with his wife, Cathy, by his side. He bravely battled stage 4 pancreatic cancer for a short time until he was lifted to his eternal home.

Ron was born on November 27, 1948 in Latrobe, Pennsylvania to Ralph and Virginia (Davison) Moorhead. He had two older siblings, Patricia (Pat) and Timothy (Tim), and a younger sister Robin. He spent his younger childhood in Blairsville, Pennsylvania before the family moved to southern California which they called home.

Ron was an outstanding football player and a record-setting track star at Santa Ana Valley High School in Santa Ana, California. He graduated in 1966 then attended the University of Colorado at Boulder where he played football for a short period of time. Moving back to Southern California he opened his first auto mechanic shop, "The Bug In," where began his love of cars. Some years later he found himself serving as Fire Captain of the Carbon Canyon Fire Department with the department's first all-women fire crew.

Ron eventually found himself in Willits which he called home for 40 years. Owning various auto mechanic shops in both Southern California and then in Willits, he became an expert in maintaining and repairing automobiles. Ron eventually found his niche test-driving vehicles for automakers as a journalist for multiple national auto magazines for over 30 years. His auto-writing peers describe him as the equivalent to an old-growth redwood: tall, robust, and confident with a keen gaze.

Ron completed his career as the Executive Director of the Willits Chamber of Commerce after 39 years of service; consisting of many years on the Board of Directors and as Board President. Through his selfless dedication and leadership, Ron played a pivotal role in many accomplishments benefiting the greater Willits Community. The Willits Chamber of Commerce became the first Chamber in the nation, under Ron's tutelage, to become a member of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) in 2006, which has provided invaluable tools to promote and support our local independently-owned and operated businesses.

Furthermore, recognizing a golden opportunity from the fire storm of interest created by Laura Hillenbrand's book, "Seabiscuit: An American Legend," Ron worked with Ridgewood Ranch and the Mendocino County Museum to promote the Seabiscuit Walking Tours, followed by the Chamber co-hosting the west coast premiere of "Seabiscuit" (a PBS documentary) and the hometown motion picture premiere of "Seabiscuit," for which proceeds were donated to the construction of the new Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital.

During his time working on the Seabiscuit project, Ron fell in love with the beauty of Ridgewood Ranch. So, it only made sense that years later, when he found the love of his life, Cathy Sanders, they would be married at this very ranch. Ron and Cathy were married in 2015 under a beautiful old-growth redwood in the company of beloved family and friends.

Ron is survived by his wife, Cathy; son, Corey; and chosen children, Keith Smith (Amy), Annie Smith, and Aaron Sanders; grandchildren, Aisha Shoemaker, Jeffrey Moorhead, Sam Smith, Ian, Stina, and Ari Oderfall; siblings Patricia Downing (Lloyd), Tim Moorhead, Robin Beguin (David); many nieces/nephews and great-nieces/nephews, notably nephew David Tutoki (Angie), who had a close relationship with Ron and was instrumental during his illness.

Ron is preceded in death by his parents Ralph W. and Virginia Moorhead; grandparents James (J.C.) and Hermina (Hermie) Davison, Watson (W.D.) Moorhead and Wilhelmina Moorhead; sister Pamela (Pammy) Moorhead; chosen son Jeffrey Scott Buckley (raised as Scottie Moorhead); and many aunts and uncles, as both parents came from large families.

A celebration of life to remember Ron will be held when it is safe for family and friends to gather and celebrate his life. Details will be announced in the future.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations for a Memorial Bench, honoring Ron, be made to the Willits Chamber of Commerce, 299 East Commercial Street, Willits, CA 95490. The bench will be placed in front of the Chamber for all to enjoy.

Ron has enriched others by his strength and conviction to be a good person, creditable source, and an honor to his family and friends.

The rest of **WUSD** | *From Page 1*

not exist, yet. But it will soon.

And it will be "posted on the website ... after ... approved," said board president Alex Bowlds.

Exactly when it will be posted is not known. However, given that it will be part of the agenda packet for the February 24 meeting, the latest it could be posted would be three days prior to the meeting, February 21.

In the meantime, "there are a lot of wheels to grind before ... we get to that agenda," said superintendent Mark Westerburg. "It's a process, not an event.

"We don't just pick a day, send in some guidelines, then restart and go," he said. "It's a process involving teachers, administrators, bus drivers, food service."

"The entire process ... takes a lot of time and takes a lot of patience," agreed Bowlds. "There's a lot of parts that have to get put together."

As to when reopening could take place, which is only possible right now for K-6, Westerburg said: "There's no possible way we would be onsite until the second or third week of March.

"Each individual site has to have a plan that works with the teachers ... [and] works with the county health office, [which] has to approve it," he said. "Then we have to communicate with parents through the teachers to see who's going to participate.

"In the three buildings [Brookside, Blosser, and Baechtel], we have to follow all the protocols from the health department ... so, yes, there's going to be masks; yes, we're going to try and be six feet apart; yes, we're going to disinfect rooms ... [have] air purifiers, air exchange, air filters, PPE equipment."

And "we have to get through our second vaccinations.... I want to make sure we wait until all of our teachers are vaccinated," he said ... [and] get in place rapid testing. I believe we're going to have a rapid testing solution that in 15 minutes we get the results."

Other aspects of reopening include busing, length of school day, and providing for students whose parents choose to keep them home.

"I don't have a good answer when people ask me, 'are you going to send a bus to pick my kid up?'" said Westerburg.

"Other schools that are open have been busing all year long, and they've had one seat here, one over there ... spacing out. If we're allowed to do that, we're certainly going to run buses," he said.

"And we're looking at an 8 to noon day and send the kids home with lunch ... to avoid all the lunch issues that would potentially rise up," he continued. "The only deviation from that is the kindergarten group, [which is] at this point talking about bringing in an am and pm session ... which creates some issues we have to deal with between the sessions."

And: "I'm envisioning at each grade level at Brookside and Blosser and most likely Baechtel, there's going to be a teacher who stays as a virtual teacher," he said. "Some parents are not going to send their child back regardless of what we do."

As to the high school and grades seven and eight at Baechtel, Westerburg noted that reopening was dependent on "community spread rate.

"We're in the wrong color," he said. "The high school and the middle school are dependent on 'did we move out of the purple tier?'"

Also instructive to this planning process is knowing the experiences of other school districts where students never left the classroom ... or did, but will be returning to in-school instruction before Willits Unified does.

Trustee King told the board about a California School Boards Association regional conference she recently attended, where the main presenter was the superintendent from Del Norte County.

"They [Del Norte] did not close ... and have been following the protocols since September, and they have had almost zero problems," she said. "I know that Fortuna's been up and running too, and has had little trouble."

WTA president Tessa Ford advised "watch[ing] what happens to Ukiah and Fort Bragg as they reopen their schools.... See what happens in weeks two and three which seem to be where the numbers spike," she said.

"I'm really glad Ukiah and Fort Bragg are going to crack the ice," said Westerburg.

"The reality is I'm not comfortable until we're fully vaccinated, have rapid testing, and we work through some kinks," he said.

Unfortunately unforeseeable "kinks" abound.

For example, evolving science.

Trustee King offered up some recent research she had read, which indicated that "young children who are below the age of puberty have been found to be less contagious when infected due to a lower amount of the receptors on their cells that the virus exploits to gain entry."

Bowlds offered another perspective.

"Interestingly enough, over the past few months, we've been getting information that suggests that younger kids ... pose less danger of transmitting this disease between themselves and between them and ... adults," he said.

But "there's more data coming out now that's refuting that or suggesting that that data may not be all that accurate," he continued.

"I'm going to send the data to all the rest of the board," he said. "I think it's at least worth looking at to decide for yourselves whether or not the early information is valuable or whether this might be."

Trustee Paula Nunez thanked Bowlds for the information and added: "From what I've read, the more time you have to study something the more information you get.... So there's a lot of the information that we got initially that I believe is now being rebutted."

In addition to the unforeseeable kink that is evolving science, add the unforeseeable kink that is evolving virus.

"We may have a spring break bonanza of COVID. It's a race between the variants and the vaccines right now," said Westerburg. "The longer you wait, the more things change. I got a note today that somebody who's been fully vaccinated ... both shots, and their gestation period is over, doesn't need to be reported as a contact.

"And that will change if a variant starts to hit northern California," he said. "Does the vaccine match the variant?'"

"It's changing by the minute. There are multiple wild cards at play," he said. "There's a ton of moving parts, and we're going to try and make the best attempt we can to check all the boxes."

Given the complexities and uncertainties, it's not certain the board will take action at the February 24 special meeting.

"It will be listed as an action item," said Bowlds. "And we may or may not take action on it. It's entirely up to us.

"The truth is, we may do all this planning for nothing," he said. "On the other hand, we may actually be doing all this planning and have something come of it.

"Please be patient with us. Give us the opportunity to move through the steps and see if we can make all these pieces come together," he continued. "It's very possible we won't be able to make all these pieces come together, but that's not a good reason for at least not attempting it."

"In late February, you may decide we're not ready to say yes or no,' and wait until the March board meeting," said Westerburg. Or "you could say, we love the plan, but we're not ready to go back."

"Nobody's going to think it's a 100 percent perfect."

The rest of **Roundup** | *From Page 1*

The deputy requested a records check on Davis and the passenger. The deputy was advised by Sheriff's Office Dispatch that Davis was on county parole with numerous terms to include submit to search, and obey all laws.

Pursuant to Davis' search terms, he and the truck were searched, and the passenger consented to a search of his person. The passenger was found to have a holster for a firearm on his person but no firearm was located on him or in the vehicle.

Davis was found to be in possession of U.S. currency on his person and five individually packaged containers of suspect methamphetamine with a total weight of 16.4 grams gross field weight, a digital scale with a white crystal residue on it, and a used glass pipe commonly used to ingest methamphetamine was found in the vehicle. Probable cause linked Davis to ownership of the items, and the passenger was released at the scene.

Davis was arrested for violation of the terms of his parole, possession of a controlled substance for sale, and transportation of a controlled substance for sale. Davis was transported to the Mendocino County Jail where he was to be held in lieu of \$25,000 in bail.

## Concealed dagger

On February 12 at approximately 2 pm, a Mendocino County Sheriff's Office deputy was dispatched to contact the employees at a business located in the 76000 block of Highway 162 in Covelo.

The employees reported a customer, Neil Waldron, 51, of Covelo, had been causing problems at the business. A short time later the deputy saw Waldron in the 76000 block of Highway 162 and initiated contact.

The deputy discovered Waldron was on Mendocino County formal probation. The deputy searched Waldron per his probation terms and located a concealed dirk / dagger-style knife and a glass methamphetamine smoking pipe on his person.

Waldron was arrested and transported to the Mendocino County Jail for the listed charges. In accordance with the COVID-19 emergency order issued by the State of California Judicial Council, bail was set at zero dollars, and Waldron was released after the jail booking process.

## Felony warrant

On February 15 at 4:09 pm, Mendocino County Sheriff's deputies observed Joseph Hipes, a 43-year-old male from Willits, in the 1700 block of South Main Street in Willits.

Deputies knew Hipes to have a felony warrant for his arrest, so he was arrested on the warrant without incident. Hipes was transported to the Mendocino County Jail where he was to be held in lieu of \$15,000 bail.

*These reports are based on press releases from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.*

The rest of **List** | *From Page 1*

please keep checking for updates.

Three concerns have been identified while calling our membership to see if they want to be vaccinated.

**1. Unanswered phone calls:** Seniors are not answering their phone calls, so please answer your phone once you have signed up to be vaccinated. You may miss your call asking you to come in and get your vaccine shot.

**2. Duplications:** Please be responsible and remove yourself from all vaccination lists after you have received your first vaccine shot, this frees up a spot for others.

**3. No internet access:** Some seniors do not have access to the internet, and as a result they cannot register for vaccination clinics offered online. This is one of the reasons we are gathering information over the phone so this group of seniors have access to being vaccinated.

For those of you who have an email account, go to [www.bit.ly/ahmendo\\_notify](http://www.bit.ly/ahmendo_notify) to sign up to Adventist Health's notification list. After you sign up at the above site, you will be notified about vaccination clinics around Mendocino County.

The rest of **Arrest** | *From Page 1*

During a subsequent search of Knight and the vehicle, WPD officers located approximately 1 pound of methamphetamine, a large quantity of heroin, DMT, Xanax pills, suspected counterfeit OxyContin pills, ammunition, and other items related to the sale and trafficking of narcotics.

Knight was also in possession of a stolen federal law enforcement badge.

Once the investigation was completed, Knight was arrested, transported to county jail, and booked on eight different felony charges, including multiple counts of transportation and sales of a controlled substance, possession of stolen property, and being a convicted felon in possession of ammunition.

The rest of **Brooktrails** | *From Page 1*

General Manager Tamara Alaniz reported that water Tank 3 on Lupine was up and running efficiently now.

Fire Chief Jon Noyer reported that the recent snowstorm resulted in many thousands of trees being downed that will not be able to be cleared. Trees fell on public as well as private land, and the big question is, who is going to pay for the cleanup? Due to this situation, he stated, "CalFire has said that the upcoming fire season is going to be the worst fire season ever."

Accounts payable of \$77,340.52 was voted on by the board and unanimously approved.

Greenbelt Committee representatives Adam Sherf read a proposal from the Recreation Greenbelt Committee that cited the importance of the trail system for Brooktrails residents. "Many residents, during the pandemic, have greatly enjoyed hiking the ... redwood forest trail system. Trails are in a large part user-maintained. In its formation it was the community's intent for the trails to be user maintained and a handful of dedicated cyclists and hikers [volunteers] have used hand saws to clean up the trails when needed.

"But now," Sherf continued, "due to the impact of the recent snowstorm there is major damage to the trails that will require significant, coordinated efforts to clear. The storm wreaked havoc on the trail system, and there are hundreds of trees down across trails and the damage is severe. A few of us have gone out and checked the damage."

Committee member Crystal Schiffbauer-Boles has been tabulating information about the damage, and is working on an interactive map that will show its extent. Most of recreational trails are currently unusable or dangerous. Much of the fire emergency greenbelt is impassible. Clearing the heavily damaged trails is beyond the scope of those using hand saws, although Brooktrails Fire crews have already been out doing some clearing work.

Sherf reported that committee members came up with ideas to help clear the trails at their February 4 meeting. Special professional hand crews with chainsaw skills could clear the large material in heavily damaged areas, as well as reduce the fuel loads. In the past CalFire or California Conservation Corps crews have done this work in Brooktrails. "We recognize that this work will take funding and we also recognize that the district's resources are limited," Sherf said. "The Greenbelt Committee could start an online fundraising campaign to help cover some of the costs."

Another idea would be "a mass volunteer effort," including Saturday Volunteer Clean Up Days with special permission granted to volunteers to use tools and vehicles for access, although liability issues might make that unfeasible.

"Realistically, a combination of paid crews and volunteers seems

The rest of **Firewise** | *From Page 1*

and firewise councils.

In the Sherwood Road corridor, northwest of Willits, in addition to the aforementioned organizations, the Brooktrails Township Community Services District and the Brooktrails Fire Department have been instrumental and have worked closely with other entities in order to create conditions that are as conducive as possible, given the constraints of money, time, and resources, to mitigate the dangers inherent when the conditions become dry towards the end of the summer months. North Coast Opportunities has also been instrumental in funding much of the budget for the Sherwood Firewise projects.

The reduction of combustible fuel, the establishment and clearing of both ingress and egress routes, and the maintenance of these, as well as identifying possible emergency challenges, has become the focus of several programs, meetings, and procedural agreements.

In a special meeting on February 11, organized and chaired by Sherwood Firewise, the primary subject of discussion was the creation of what is known as "benefit zones," in order to fund the maintenance of access routes which would provide ways for emergency vehicles and crews to gain access to fires and other natural disasters, while at the same time providing a clear route for evacuation of residents.

The efficacy of the access routes was proven during the recent Oak Fire of last year. The Firco and Schow roads had previously been cleared by crews from CalFire through an order from the Governor's Office. Utilizing these two roads, which were accessible from Highway 101, the fire crews were able to gain access to the fire along with many pieces of heavy machinery used to cut firebreaks amongst other purposes. Although these two roads were a part of the focus of the meeting, they are currently in fairly good shape and only need to be maintained.

The other route in question is the Willits Creek route which is a private road from the end of the Brooktrails Par Course down to the Northbrook subdivision of Willits. This route requires California Environmental Quality Act studies to protect the creek and its surroundings from any environmental damage during construction. This route is an old railroad, so it is fairly well-established, requiring some widening for the ingress of heavy firefighting equipment. The property owners have all agreed to allow this work and the use of the road on their property.

During the meeting it was emphasized by Keith Rutledge of Sherwood Firewise that all of these routes are to be utilized only during emergencies and at the direction of incident commanders (generally the county sheriff) at the scene. Citizens needing to evacuate during emergencies need to use Sherwood Road, which may have both lanes open in the evacuation direction. The access routes are never to be used for recreation or casual traversing. Possible evacuation could be accomplished on the routes only if directed by the incident commander.

Rutledge explained: "The emergency access routes are secured by a license agreement with the owners. It reads that the purpose is for securing the emergency access route for use in an emergency when declared by the sheriff and the county. We really need to make sure we are following the emergency services, or the sheriff, or the fire department or law enforcement, whoever is the incident commander. What we are working on here is the access to maintain these routes and keep them from becoming overgrown and unusable in the future."

"The meeting tonight," Rutledge continued, "is following on obtaining unanimous approval from the board of supervisors, in meetings with Sherwood Firewise and legal representatives from Kronick, who donated pro bono legal services. The Mendocino Community Foundation has paid for some of this, as well as Supervisor Haschak and Christian Curtis of the County Counsel's Office.

"We've been meeting regularly as a team to set up benefit

to be the best approach," Sherf said. In addition, the committee advised warning signs be posted at a few key locations to let trail users know of the dangers. "The top and bottom of Mossy Rock, the top of Gooseberry, Last Chance and bottom of Thimbleberry would be good locations and would deter people from the most dangerous and difficult to get to locations."

Fire Chief Noyer stated: "The wall that we are up against is: With limited funds, how do we fund this? CalFire is no longer participating with this much anymore. What we've in, the past, spent \$200/day to accomplish is now going up to \$2,000/day.... Problem #1: Who do we get to do this vital work? and Problem #2: How do we pay for it? We don't have paid staff working on the weekends. We would have to get approval for staff to work overtime on the weekends to do this.

"As far as volunteers go," Noyer continued, "volunteerism has declined tremendously in the fire service. I cannot [due to liability issues] release the use of our chipper to anyone other than our staff or CalFire. Following the storm we are going back to square one and starting all over again. We have thousands upon thousands of trees down all over in Brooktrails, and I'm a little overwhelmed regarding how we are going to clean this up."

Finally, Director Tony Orth said: "I've had people ask me, why wasn't this declared a disaster? Declaring a disaster would make state and federal funds available. Also, both of our U.S. senators sponsored a bill before one of them became vice-president calling for the COVID relief money being contemplated by Congress to include special districts. I would think that the trail system is very important for recreation for people during this time of being trapped within their households, and the mental health of those households, and I wonder if we can't do some sort of estimate about what the cost was of damage in Brooktrails."

General Manager Alaniz said the county Office of Emergency Services did suggest Brooktrails look into declaring a disaster. "I looked quite heavily into this," she said, and "because so much of the damage is on private property, that was one aspect of my research that hindered finding a valuation that would hit the dollar amount, the threshold of the cost of the disaster.

"There are other criteria involved, and I did not get to the point where I could feel comfortable bringing a recommendation to the board at this time. I couldn't put it together in a context that seemed appropriate and doable.... I'm certainly open to any additional information in regard to this."

Alaniz also mentioned Brooktrails was part of the California Special Districts Association "to allow special districts to apply for COVID relief money," and watching to see if relief bills that include special districts are passed.

zones and finding out what it's going to take to get this done. We presented this in a report to the board of supervisors in their meeting last month. The board gave authorization to continue the formation of this benefit zone area which will, currently just include two access routes, the Willits Creek Route and the Firco Route." (The Firco route includes Schow Road which intersects Firco.)

The Thursday evening Zoom meeting was attended by 39 interested citizens and officials, including Supervisor John Haschak, Holly Roberson of the Kronick law firm who has been donating much pro bono work, Tony Orth of the Brooktrails Township Board of Directors, Eric Hart of the Williams Ranch Fire Safe Council (who is looking to create his own benefit zone on the area near the Ridge), members of Sherwood Firesafe Communities, and other residents wanting to become familiar with the efforts to establish a benefit zone.

The benefit zone is hopefully going to be a pilot program for the County of Mendocino. Rutledge continued: "Where is the money coming from to maintain the routes? We've had unanimous consent from both Brooktrails and the county to continue what we're doing. The county has now stepped up to become the responsible agency. The county Department of Transportation is going to take on the responsibility of making sure all this happens and it stays maintained.

"The way we do this is through a 'benefit zone,' Rutledge continued. "This will allow for individual property owners to self-assess for public safety services and, in our case, to fund the maintenance of the emergency access routes. We form a zone that is a legal entity. It takes a resolution from the county, a public hearing, and then a ballot process where the property owners that are impacted in this zone get to register whether they are for or against it.

"The benefit zone for these two routes is Brooktrails, Spring Creek, Sylvandale, and the Gates subdivisions. These are only the improved properties. Vacant lots aren't included, nor are second parcels," he said.

"A professional engineer needs to confirm the basic maintenance specifications and to do what is called 'apportionment,' make a decision as to if everyone pays the same or if there should be some other payment mechanism," Rutledge said. "Right now, the benefit is going to accrue to everybody equally. Balloting goes to the property owners. This is what is called, 'a majority protest' type of vote. Which means that, for example, if we send out 1,000 ballots, there would have to be 501 votes coming back 'no' in order to not be successful.

"The Majority Protest is a good way for property owners to make sure they have a group of people who are willing to make these payments or at least they don't have a large group of people who are not willing to make the payments," Rutledge explained. "That is a public process coming up within the next six months.

"If we do get the approval, we will move forward and start the process of setting the benefit zone up with the county, figuring out what kind of work needs to be done. Both the Firco and the Willits Creek routes will have had quite a bit of recent work done to them so there won't be a great need for a lot of maintenance for the first few years, so we can start collecting and saving a little bit of money so we will have it when we need it."

The estimated assessment per improved property is expected to fall within the \$20 to \$30 range per year.

For further information, visit: <https://www.sherwoodfirewise.org> or email: [info@sherwoodfirewise.org](mailto:info@sherwoodfirewise.org)

The rest of **Chickens** | *From Page 1*

alive and well, with only one being a rooster. Cock-a-doodle whoo hoo!

The one that perished was early on, and despite all efforts to keep the little blonde buggler alive, they passed on while just a few weeks old. There was a second, dubbed Precious by the 11-year-old girl in the house, who almost joined her feathery friend in the burial ground of Margie Drive, but this little chick made it through and is now laying happily in the coop.

Precious, a Silver Laced Polish Crested, was only two chicks from the group of 24 that arrived at Coast Hardware to make it to full feather-afro glory. Pamalee Thrift, chicken guru and employee at Coast Hardware, talked this first-time chick-raiser through keeping little Precious alive, despite it being listless and weak for several days. After pro-biotic beak dips and lots of heat lamp time, we tried separation from the rest of the bigger birds, leaving Precious just with Penguin, a Sapphire Gem breed chicken, who reluctantly became her sole roommate. And finally, what we assumed was the lynchpin to keeping her alive: A few days of having her beak dipped in yogurt, which seemed to help the little chicken pull the rest of the way through, much to everyone's surprise.

Thrift was also happy to note the second bird who survived from the group was named "Phyllis Diller," and lives locally with the owner Wendy.

The birds proved to be the most entertaining for Roxie, the German Shepherd, who took her role as intense watcher, walkway obstacle, and chick-poker whenever possible, very seriously. As they moved from bin to crate to outside, Roxie continued to enjoy going out with whoever is tasked with shutting in the chickens at night, or letting them out in the morning. While she'd rather be inside the coop tucking them in at night, or kissing them good morning, her role has been restricted to sitting in the open door and making sure all chickens exit through the slider and out to the coop, rather than past her and into the yard. She's mostly successful, but also enjoys "helping" herd the escapees back into the coop.

Now, all nine of the birds are happily living with the crew of old ladies, some of whom still make attempts to lay their fair share of eggs in relation to the amount of chicken food consumed, but mainly, it's the new ladies who are filling cartons and frying pans with gusto as of late. They free range in the fenced-in portion of the main yard, but also have access to roam the back 10 acres, plucking bugs and worms from the grassy field. The brave ones venture down to do some mingling with the miscellaneous assortment of water fowl who come to visit the pond.

Homegrown eggs are incomparable to store-bought eggs and the ease of walking out to the coop, where breakfast is waiting, is an experience everyone should get to enjoy. Chickens also love to eat almost any and all table scraps, so they work as amazing little garbage disposals and offer peace of mind that if you just can't finish that burrito, there's logic that you'll get to enjoy it as an omelet, essentially, in a few days.

Three local businesses are offering chicks and chick-raising supplies: Coast Hardware, J.D. Redhouse and Willits Power. For reservations, questions and more, reach out directly to the businesses or follow them on social media for updates.

Coast is expecting their next shipment on March 5 and expecting an assortment of exotic breeds including: Cinnamon Queen, California White, Mystic Onyx, Polish Silvers and Sapphire Gems.

J.D. Redhouse is expecting their next shipment on March 11 and have ordered Ameraucanas, Light Brahmas, Barred Rocks, Black Sex-links, Buff Orphingtons, Golden Laced Wyandottes, New Hampshire Reds, Silver Laced Wyandottes and Slamon Favololles.

Willits Power is expecting their next shipment on March 3 and have ordered Easter Eggers, Heritage Reds, Barred Rocks, Turkeys and Blue Copper Marans.

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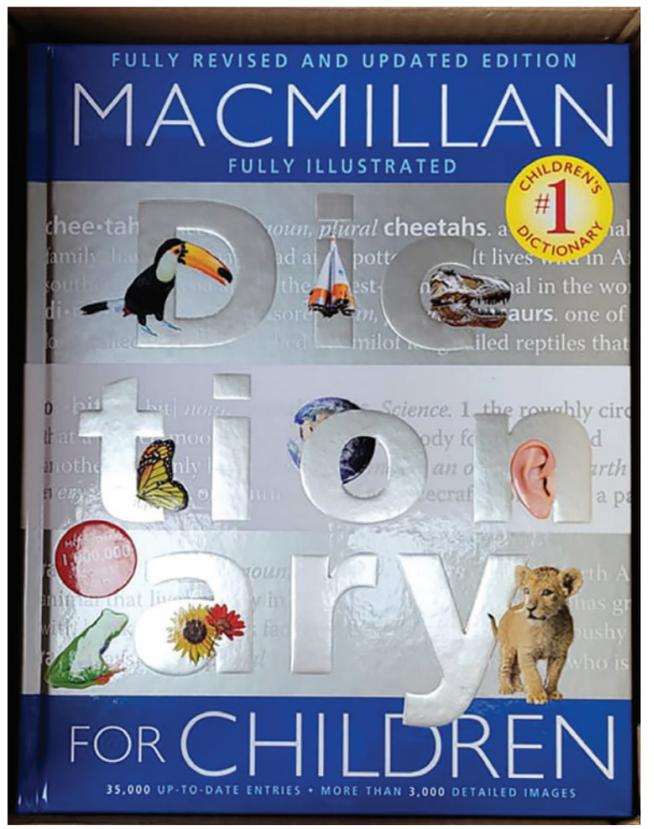
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Above, left: Dictionary project leader Alexander Rich delivers dictionaries to Blosser Lane Elementary School's third-graders. Other Rotarians who will be helping deliver the dictionaries are Tara Moratti, Jenny Senter, Jeanne King and Brad Walton. Above, right: The Willits Rotary Club is donating 244 Macmillan Dictionaries to local third-graders.

# Rotary Dictionary Project

Willits Rotary Club is proud to announce our annual Willits Rotary Club dictionary project, where we will be donating 244 dictionaries to third-graders in our area. On Thursday, February 11, we made our first delivery of dictionaries to Blosser Lane Elementary School's third-graders. Because the students were not on site, we left them in the classrooms with the help of staff member Sharon Hillard.

Other schools that will receive dictionaries for their third-graders in the coming weeks are:

- Sherwood Elementary
- Willits Elementary Charter School
- Laytonville Elementary

Round Valley Elementary  
Eel River Charter School

Alexander Rich, the chair of this project, shared: "I have a third-grader myself, so I know how challenging this year has been for students, parents and teachers. The last thing we wanted was for this year's third-graders to miss out on receiving a dictionary like the students in the years ahead of them. While it wasn't the same as being able to hand-deliver dictionaries to students like we have done in years past at Blosser Elementary, it was nice hearing from teachers how excited students were to learn that their dictionaries had arrived."

– Submitted by Jenny Senter, Willits Rotary



Congrats | Birth announcement

## Piper Michelle Kelsey

Christopher and Michelle Kelsey of Wakefield, Massachusetts are happy to announce the birth of their daughter, Piper Michelle Kelsey, on February 7, 2021. Chris grew up in Willits and

graduated from Willits High School in 1999. He later attended Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona, where he received a master's degree in Safety Science. He works for Raytheon Technologies in Massachusetts. Michelle grew up in Massachusetts and attended Curry College in Milton, where she obtained a degree in child development.

Chris's parents, Mike and Carol Kelsey, live in Willits and are thrilled to welcome Piper to the family.

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