

Thinking about Willits

At the 95490 Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, February 22, Brooktrails General Manager Denise Rose talked about some questions and exercises she suggested everyone consider, when thinking about how we could improve our town. She mentioned specifically:

1. Make a list of five things about Willits [the greater Willits area] that are most important to you.
2. Make a list of five things you would improve about Willits.
3. Name one place in Willits that you really love, and one place that you would improve.

4. And, finally, what you would do to recreate or create new community here in Willits?
- Other questions from handouts Rose brought to the meeting:
- What does community mean to you?
 - What places or activities make you feel as if you are part of a community?
 - Name one thing that you really enjoy doing during your leisure time (not in your own house). Are you able to do it in Willits?
 - Name one thing that you could do, alone or with

others, to enhance a sense of community in Willits (big or small).

Willits Weekly would love to hear from our readers about what they'd list and how they'd answer any of these questions. By "Willits," we mean the greater Willits area, including Brooktrails, the Little Lake Valley and other outlying areas, and we'd be pleased to hear from our readers in the Laytonville or Covelo areas, too, about their towns. Please email responses to willitsweekly@gmail.com or send by snail mail to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits CA 95490 (email is preferred). Thank you! and thanks to Denise Rose for this good idea.

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

95490 Town Hall

To the Editor:

What a great community Willits/95490 is! Not only do we live in a beautiful place with lovely mountains, valleys, creeks and trees, but we have a nice little town. Part of what makes it so great are the many people who care about our town, who have ideas and who work to improve it.

This was apparent at our last Town Hall meeting on February 22. The council chambers at Willits City Hall were completely filled. Our topic was: "How can we work together to make Willits/95490 a better community?"

Our three guest speakers were Tom Woodhouse, our new supervisor, Bruce Burton, our mayor, and Denise Rose, Brooktrails manager. I am grateful to these speakers for coming and giving their time on a Sunday afternoon. That gratitude goes out to other city council members and city employees who came, and to each citizen who showed up to participate. When we gather and share our ideas, our community is enriched by our efforts.

Our Town Halls are set up by our committee for Willits/95490 to have better communication with one another, so we may work better together. That takes speaking, but equally importantly, it takes listening. This is our main goal: better communication and an even better community!

Many excellent ideas were shared, but if we are going to get any of them done we either need to form action groups or give input to the city's budget planning, including attending the special council goal-setting workshop, Saturday, March 28, from 9 am to noon, at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. The council will set major goals for the next two years at this workshop.

Please plan to attend our next Town Hall, Sunday, April 19 from 4 to 6 pm. Our topic is as yet undecided. All are welcome for a good exchange of ideas. For more info, contact Jane at 456-9067.

Jane McCabe, Willits

Herbicide Forum on Sunday

To the Editor:

An Herbicide Forum at the Little Lake Grange on Sunday, March 4 to 6 pm, plans to educate on a variety of shockingly lethal herbicides that Caltrans is being allowed to use in Little Lake Valley, specifically in highly sensitive wetlands. You may recognize the names of some of them: 2,4-D, Imazapyr, Garlon. Come to find out what Caltrans has in mind: hear about alternatives to using these poisons and how you can make a difference.

Caltrans owns one-third of Little Lake Valley, most of it wetlands in the north where the little lake forms each winter.

Where it is not wetlands, Caltrans will attempt to "create wetlands" by digging depressions. In order to speed up the transition from created pasture to native wetland species, the use of certain herbicides has been allowed by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Water Board. Other herbicides require a special permit that the public will have a chance to comment on.

What are these herbicides and how do they affect the watershed, the creatures that live here, and ultimately ourselves?

This forum is an opportunity to find out about these issues, meet other concerned people, and take action to protect our environment.

Rosamond Crowder, Willits

Thanks from Sober Grad

To the Editor:

The Willits Sober Grad Party Planning Committee would like to thank our wonderful Willits community for your overwhelming support of our recent Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. This was the biggest breakfast of all, and you were able to meet many of this year's upcoming graduates as they served you.

What a fine job they did! We would like to apologize to those of you who had a long wait before your food was delivered. The Little Lake Grange members, who did all the cooking and much more, were working as quickly as they could. To them we offer our heartfelt thanks for doing this year after year!

We also thank our local merchants for their generous food and/or cash donations: Brown's Corner, Buttercups Children's Boutique, Flowers by Annette, Long Valley Market, Mariposa Market, Safeway and WalMart. We especially thank Tami Elliott who coordinated this endeavor.

We are all partnered in keeping our children safe on such an important night of their lives. We are a small town, and they are, indeed, all "our children."

Angi Edgar, member, Willits Sober Grad Party Planning Committee

Proud to be from Willits

To the Editor:

I had a great time at Tim Blake's Emerald Cup in Santa

Ann Maglinte, Willits



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Above, Kids of all grades enjoyed showing off their silly and crazy socks Thursday, including several of the teachers and Principal Robert Chavez, shown in the photo at top right. Chavez can be seen in his famous "Pink Monkey Toe Socks," second from the right.

Below, left: students from Mrs. Haschak's class and some from Mrs. Bauer's class show off their socks.

Photos by Maureen Moore

CrAZy SOCK DAY

Blosser Lane Elementary students showcase school spirit

"Crazy Sock Day is a great way to build school spirit and create camaraderie amongst students and staff at our school," said Blosser Lane Elementary School principal Robert Chavez.

School spirit was in full swing indeed last Thursday during the annual Crazy Sock Day, with dozens of girls and boys, staff and teachers showcasing their spiffiest sockwear.

"These were recommended by my wife," laughed Chavez, motioning at his own pink monkey toe sock-clad feet. "She thought they would be the most fun."

Other fun, themed dress-up days that "bring togetherness to the school" include Crazy Hair Day, Whoville Day and, of course, the dress-up classic, Halloween.



COLUMN | Energize with Erin



From resolutions to habit:

3 steps to making your workout routine stick

Erin Fitzpatrick
Columnist

So many people had some sort of fitness/weight loss resolution for the New Year. In the first few weeks of January, I observed people out walking and biking, and exercise classes and gyms were full of new, eager fitness-minded people ready to get in shape. But as the weeks pass, many of us who had good intentions may have turned them into excuses.

If you're one of these people, don't be too hard on yourself. Half of the people who start an exercise program quit. It's easy to talk yourself out of a workout. "I'm too tired," "It's too cold or rainy," or "I have to work" are common excuses. But the right attitude and a few simple tips can get your fitness routine going again or keep it on track.

Choose an activity you enjoy

This may seem like a no brainer, but you would be surprised by how many people pick a new, popular workout just because everyone is doing it. If you're not a morning person, don't choose to run at 5 am before work. These routines aren't sustainable for you, and you'll end up giving up.

People who are internally motivated exercise because they like it and are more likely to stick with their exercise routine than someone who wants to lose 10 pounds or get in shape by summer. Exercise shouldn't be a chore. The more you enjoy your workout, the more likely you are to make it a habit. Try a variety of programs

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

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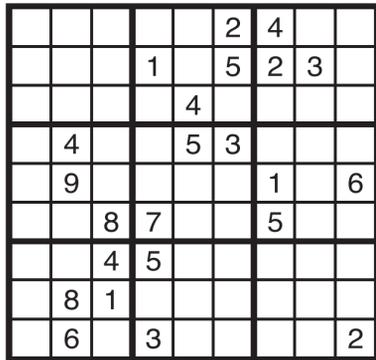
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Puzzle Page & More

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Sudoku



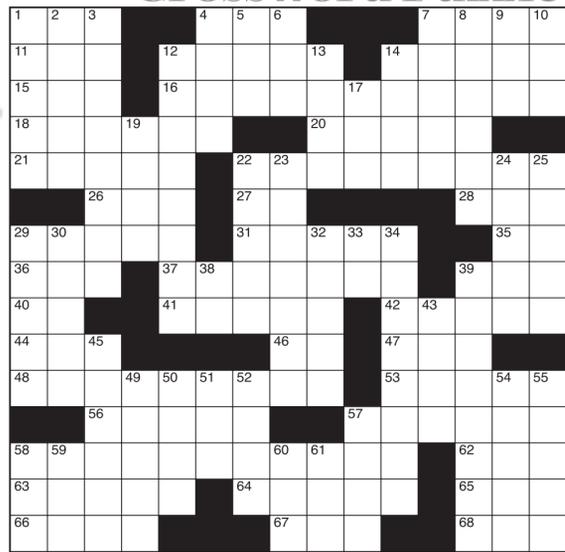
Level: Intermediate



How To Sudoku:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a Sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Crossword Puzzle



CLUES ACROSS

- Printing speed
- Fed
- A domed or vaulted recess
- Macaws
- Neck garment
- A billionth of an ohm
- Local area network
- Cleve. basketball hero
- Wounded & disfigured
- Civil Rights group
- Master of ceremonies
- Smallest artery branches
- Ref
- Exist
- Diagram of earth's surface
- SE Asian sarsaparilla soft drink
- Fire remains
- 3rd tone
- Before
- It breaks down lactose
- A waterproof raincoat
- Atomic #18
- NW Canadian territory
- Hindquarters
- Follows sigma
- Rural delivery
- Point that is one point N

CLUES DOWN

- Swedish statesman Olaf
- Baltic flat-bottomed boat (alt. sp.)
- Fingernail treatment
- Breeze through
- Check
- Stray
- Ancient computing devices
- Something cheerleaders wave
- The woman
- Ambulance rescue initials
- In a drowsy manner
- A set of type of one style
- Not completely closed
- No (Scottish)
- Microelectromechanical system
- Having the wind against the forward side
- Reestablish
- Khloe K's former husband
- Verse forms
- Places to sit
- Chilean pianist Claudio
- Rounds of poker
- Spanish be
- Sing and play for somebody
- Chemical symbol for gold
- Praying insects
- Israeli politician Abba
- 7th planet from the sun
- Br. plural of a penny
- Largest continent
- Distress signal
- Senate and People of Rome
- Fill with high spirits
- Egyptian statesman Anwar
- Non-verbal entertainer
- 12th calendar month (abbr.)
- A major division of geological time
- Ultrahigh frequency
- Yes vote

LOTS OF LAUGHS WORD SEARCH

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

ACTOR	CLUB	HUMOR	RIFFING
AD-LIB	COMEDY	IMPROVISATION	ROUTINE
AUDIENCE	COMIC	JOKE	SEGUE
BEAT	FLOPPING	KILL	SHOWCASE
BIT	FUNNY	LAUGH	SHTICK
BODY LANGUAGE	GAG	MICROPHONE	SKETCH
BOMB	GIG	OPEN MIKE	STAGE
CHUCKLE	HAPPINESS	PUNCHLINE	STORYTELLING
CLOSING	HEADLINER	REGULARS	TAKE

Get ready for the Harrah Senior Center's Chili Cookoff on Friday evening (March 6; 5:30 to 7 pm; 1501 Baechtel Road; \$8, \$5 children, \$7 center members; see Calendar for more event details), with this tasty recipe for black bean chili.

Canned beans work great, but you can always start with dried beans, giving them an overnight soak or the quick "hot soak" method recommended by the California Dry Bean Advisory Board's website: to 1 pound of dried beans, add 10 cups of hot water and salt (up to 2 teaspoons), and boil for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let beans sit for at least 1 hour.

Discard the used soaking water (your house or deck plants will love it!), rinse beans, and cook according to your recipe.

Each cup of dried beans expands to about 2-1/2 cups after being soaked.

The Senior Center's 8th annual Chili Cookoff is a fundraiser for the center's Outreach Program: The Program's main focus is helping seniors and disabled people, filling the gaps between services without a lot of bureaucracy, but, says director Priscilla Tarver, "Our doors are open to any age group. We try to help everybody who walks in the door. There's nothing we say 'no' to: no trouble, problem or need."

Local volunteers and professionals know the Outreach Program is a resource to call if they're concerned about a neighbor or a client.

Hot Hot Hot!

Senior Center Chili Cookoff this weekend

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For more information & to sign up, please contact:
 Jackie Herz at 459-3232 ext: 1309 jackieherz@willitsunifed.com
 Katie Cochran at 459-5385 ext: 1440 katiecochran@willitsunifed.com

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Some submitted snapshots from Girl Scouts selling cookies this year, including Taylor and Sierra of the Cadettes Troop #10577 at right; Charley Lamprich and Mariah Rodriguez with Sergeant Jon Anderson and Officer Mike Bennett below; Lillian Koepfel and Mariah Rodriguez below left and Jasmine from Troop 10735.



Last chance for Cookies!

Girl Scouts end annual sale on Sunday, March 8

Just a few days are left to pick up any last-minute boxes of Girl Scout cookie favorites during the 2015 sale. There are two new varieties of Girl Scout cookies available this year: "Rah-Rah Raisin," with whole grain oats, raisins and Greek yogurt-flavored chunks, and - tah-dah! - a gluten-free option: "Toffee-Tastic." Classic cookies also still on sale this year are Thin Mints, Samoas, Tagalongs, Trefoils, Do-Si-Dos, and Savannah Smiles. With the conclusion looming on March 8, Girl Scouts will be out selling door to door, and watch for cookie sales in front of local businesses over the weekend. Make sure to stock up - frozen Thin Mints are delicious! - before they're all gone!

OBITUARY | Rita Rowland
Rita Rowland
 Rita Cajka Rowland passed away peacefully at home in Willits, California, on February 27, 2015.



She was predeceased by her brother, Frank Cajka, and sister, Regina Kalinski. She is survived by her brothers, Ray and Robert Cajka; her two children, Jim Rowland and Barbara Durand; her four grandchildren, Natasha Braskamp, Jason Smith, Keely Mikkelsen, Erika Rowland; and her seven great-grandchildren.

Rita was born in Omaha, Nebraska on August 30, 1927, to Frank and Mary Cajka. She came to Laytonville, California in 1952 with her family, and then relocated to Willits in 1971. She embarked upon a new career as a Real Estate agent and broker that would last her entire life. She was well-known and well-respected in the community.

The loss of Rita, to those who loved her so greatly, will be difficult, but there is peace in knowing that she found pleasure in this life, adored her family, and is now with the Lord.

The family will be having a private burial service according to Rita's wishes. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Redwood Valley Community Church, in her memory.



Happy Birthday Baby River

We can't believe you're turning 1!! Happy 1st birthday, River, we wouldn't trade the last year for anything. Love, Mom and Dadd

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Thursday, March 5

Irish quintet Goitse in concert: The contagiously energetic Irish quintet Goitse (pronounced "gwitcha"), just awarded "Trad Group of the Year 2015," performs at the Willits Community Theatre at 7 pm. Goitse is "one of the most sought-after bands amongst connoisseurs of Irish traditional music and features World and All-Ireland bodhrán champion Colm Phelan, with guitarist Conal O'Kane, Aine McGeeney on fiddle and vocals, James Harvey on banjo and mandolin, and pianist and piano accordionist, Tadhg O' Meachair. Advance tickets are \$15 and available in person at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street; online at www.brownpapertickets.com; and by phone 247 at 1-800-838-3006. Tickets will also be available at the door until sold out.



sign in. Bring your cards and play at the Willits Library! Participants are welcome to bring snacks and beverages. Info: librarian Jill Dorman at 459-5908.

Shanachie Pub: Pick & Pull, NorCal infused old time acoustic dance music. 9 pm, 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, March 7

Junior Grange Yard Sale: today and Sunday, March 8, from 9 am to noon, in front of the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. To raise funds for Junior Grange activities.

NorCal Inventors Club Meeting: 1 pm at Wowser, 330 East Commercial Street. "This free event is intended for anyone who's an inventor (or wants to become one). This is an opportunity to share ideas and resources, and to build a network of people to tap into for support." Info: call 459-9697 or visit www.Wowser.org.

Drop-in Knitting Circle: Willits Library will be hosting a drop-in knitting circle on the first Saturday of every month, starting March 7, from 3 to 4:30 pm. "Bring your projects to share and show off! We will have expert knitters on board who can solve any problems and teach everyone to knit! Bring your own projects – we'll supply the coffee!" Signup at the Willits Library if you would like a reminder before each knitting circle, but signing up is not necessary: Everyone is welcome to drop in.

"Complementary Artists": March show at the Willits Center for the Arts features mixed-media art work by students of the Art Marketing class taught by Alyssum Wier last semester at the Mendocino College in Ukiah. "We are a group of unique individuals whose work complements each other like colors." Opening Reception set for Saturday, March 7 at 7 pm at the center, 71 East Commercial Street. Show runs through March; gallery hours are Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 7 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 3 pm. See article elsewhere in Willits Weekly for more details. Info: exhibit coordinator Gabee Permenter, baghiqr@yahoo.com or 707-841-7261.

Mendocino County Museum Road Show: the 2015 Mendocino County Museum Road Show opens in Willits tonight, at Willits High School, 7 pm, for one night only, before traveling to shows in Point Arena, Ukiah, Philo and Fort Bragg. Now in its second year, the show features enactments of oral history stories by noted local actors and is accompanied by music both original and traditional by Americana trio, All About Sally. Tickets (advance purchase is recommended) are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors

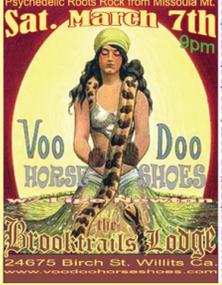


65+, and \$10 for youth 20 and under. Order tickets online at www.MendocinoMuseum.org, by calling 459-2736, or by visiting the museum, 400 East Commercial Street, during open hours, 10 am to 4:30 pm, Wednesday through Sunday.

What's Happening Around Town

things to do, see and enjoy in and around Willits

Voodoo Horseshoes at the Brooktrails Lodge: remove accumulated Psychedelic Roots Rock from Missoula, Montana, sediments; the flushing is expected to take one month to complete. Flush starts at the base of Pine Mountain, and moves westerly into town; Main Street flushing, which will happen at night, is expected to start on or about March 12. Watch for wet streets! Water may be brownish: it is safe to drink, but may stain white laundry. For more detailed information about where the flushing will be occurring, customers may call Willits City Hall at 459-7104.



Sunday, March 8

Harrah Senior Center Pancake Breakfast: 8 to 11 am at the center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Pancakes, eggs, and your choice of ham, bacon, or sausage. Adults \$7, Members \$6, and kids \$5. Info: 459-6826.

Junior Grange Yard Sale: See Saturday, March 7 listing for details.

Nerf Battle: Junior Grange hosts this event from 1 to 5 pm at Recreation Grove, across the street from the Willits Library. Everyone is welcome to come and play! Please bring your own weapons (with your name written on them). Junior Grange will supply some regular-size bullets. If you do bring your own bullets, please be sure they are ID'd with your mark. "We'll have big sheets of cardboard, lots of tape and Gribbeam for building forts. We'll mark off a playing area among the trees with yellow "caution tape" so that there will be "corners" to put the forts in." Rain will delay the battle until Sunday, March 22.

Herbicide Forum: As part of its plans for required mitigation of the Willits bypass project, Caltrans is proposing to use herbicides on wetlands, creeks and grasslands in the Little Lake Valley. Find out concerns and alternatives to this plan at a forum on Sunday, March 8 from 4 to 6 pm, at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street (at Pine Street). Speakers: Madge Strong, Willits City Council member, "Caltrans's plans to poison Little Lake Valley, effects on the water, the land and the people"; Mary Clark, basket weaver, California Indian Basket Weaver's Association, Round Valley tribal member, "Herbicide threats to the health of basket weavers"; Eric Salcido, community leader, "Herbicide threats to workers"; Sara Grusky, organic farmer, Green Upstarts Farm, "Migration of Herbicides"; David Drell, physiologist, "The Truth about Roundup"; and Naomi Wagner, "Earth First! A Brief History of Eco-trans' non-violent response to herbicides." Sponsored by Save Our Little Lake Valley (SOLLV) and co-sponsored by the Little Lake Grange. Info: Madge Strong at 459-1493.

Monday, March 9
City of Willits Water Main Flushing Program: City of Willits starts the annual water main flushing and valve-operating program today to

Tuesday, March 10

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre for all ages, all showings. This week's Tightwad movies: "Kingsman: Secret Service," "Focus" and "McFarland, USA." For showtimes: www.noyotheatre.com. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6696.



Girl Scouts World Thinking Day Ceremony: "Come one, come all to the Troop #10577 World Thinking Day ribbon cutting ceremony at 5:30 pm, Tuesday, March 10 at the Rec Grove Park. We will be presenting our Peace Pole Project and dedicating the site with a ribbon cutting ceremony to complete the last step to earn our Thinking Day Badge."

Thursday, March 12

WHS Boosters Club Meeting: 6 pm at the Willits High School Food Center. Help support athletics and other extracurricular activities at WHS.

Auditions for "Kill Me, Deadly": Auditions for the Willits Community Theatre's main-stage production of "Kill Me, Deadly" will be held at the playhouse, 37 West Van Lane, Thursday, March 12 from 7 to 9 pm, and on Saturday, March 14 from noon to 2 pm. "Kill Me, Deadly" by Bill Robens is a hilarious, tongue-in-cheek spoof of old "film noir" movies like "The Maltese Falcon," which relies on a machine-gun rapid delivery for its comedic effects. Parts for 3 women, ages 20 to 42, 2 women ages 40 to 60, and 10 men, ages 20 to 60. The role of the central character Charlie Nickels has already

been pre-cast; most of the male actors will be expected to do two or more roles. Directed by Damian Sebouhian; rehearses in May and opens on June 12 for a three-week run. Copies of the script are available at the front desk of the Willits Public Library. For electronic copies, email producer Mike A'Dair at michaeldair69@yahoo.com. Questions?: Sebouhian can be reached at 841-1634.

Friday, March 13

Friday Night Magic and Pokémon: every Friday through March at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street, from 5 to 7:30 pm. For youth ages 10 to 14; parental contact info required to sign in. Bring your cards and play at the Willits Library! Participants are welcome to bring snacks and beverages. Info: librarian Jill Dorman at 459-5908.

Shanachie Pub: Melanie O'Reilly and Corwin Zekley, Celtic fusion. 8 pm. \$5 cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, March 14

American Legion St. Patrick's Dinner: American Legion-Willits Post #174 presents the annual Duane Brown Memorial St. Patrick's Dinner, featuring Corned Beef & Cabbage, Murphy's (Spuds), Carrots, Onions, etc. and Dessert. 5 to 7 pm, at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 191 North Main Street. \$18 adult, \$9 child under 12, free for children under 5 years. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

Cupcake Wars: 2nd annual "Cupcake Wars" benefit event for the Willits High School Boosters Club and Cooking, from 3 to 5 pm (may be extended to 6 pm), at the Willits Community Center. Entry fee for competitors is \$20; pick up a form at Ace Copy or Imagination Station, or call or text 354-2312. Participants decorate a table and provide at least 24 cupcakes. Categories for prizes include: "Best Decorated Cupcakes," "Best Tasting Cupcakes," "Best Decorated Table" and "People's Choice." Prizes of \$50 each except "People's Choice," which is \$100. Cupcakes are \$2 each, \$10 per half-dozen, and \$20 a dozen. Tickets to buy cupcakes are purchased at the door; \$1 entry fee just to come in and look; \$11 buys a "People's Choice" voting ticket.

Shanachie Pub: Darius Lux and Friends. 8:30 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Sunday, March 15

Brookside School Farm Work Day and Tour: from 10 am to 2 pm, 20 Spruce Street. Part of the Mendocino Farmers Guild's regular calendar of farm tours, work-days and potlucks, featuring one Mendocino County farm a month. "The goal is to build a network of mutual support among

the community (especially new and young) small farmers and to also reach out to the community and show-off our farms! Tour these inspiring farms. Then, get your hands dirty with some serious farm work. Bring a dish to share at the potluck. April's Work day is set for Saturday, April 11 at Willits' Green Uprising Farm, 2301 East Hill Road. Info: www.mendocinofarmersguild.com or 707 216-5549. "Founded by farmers for farmers, the Mendocino Farmers Guild seeks to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, resources, support and inspiration within the Mendocino County farming community." The Farmers Guild plans to produce a beautiful Farm Tour poster every quarter; this first quarter's poster was



done by Willits artist Marlena River, with the help of Thea and Sara Grusky.

"Understanding Community Rights" Forum: The Community Rights Organization of Willits (CROW) hosts this forum on "Understanding Community Rights, Corporate 'Rights' and the Rights of Nature: An evening with Movement Rights advocates Shannon Biggs and Pennie Opal Plant." 4 to 5:30 pm, at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. "What does the passage of Measure S mean for the state of California? What comes next for Mendocino County? Shannon Biggs is a leading international speaker, author and activist on the growing movement for Rights of Nature. Shannon is a lecturer of weekend "Democracy Schools" that explore the rights-based framework for change, and leads rights of nature trainings around the country. Pennie Opal Plant is of Yaqui, Mexican, English, Dutch, Choctaw, Cherokee and Algonquin ancestry and is co-founder of Movement Rights. Pennie has been an activist for more than 30 years on anti-nuclear, environmental and indigenous rights. She has been a lecturer of Democracy School with the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund since 2005, promoting a rights-based strategy for confronting corporate power and creating real democracy from the grassroots." CROW meets the third Thursday of every month, this month March 19, at 5:30 pm in Room 10 at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Everyone is welcome. Info: www.crow.org or crownow@gmail.com or contact Peter Norris at 456-9968.

Stations of the Cross: "During the season of Lent, a time of prayer and preparation for Easter, prayers for the Stations of the Cross will be offered every Friday evening at 6 pm, from now through the end of March" at St. Francis in the Redwoods Episcopal Church at the corner of Main Street and Commercial streets. "All are welcome for these simple prayers; come as you are."

Cards and Games at Willits Library: free games in the Willits Library's Community Room. Tuesday bridge sessions from 1:30 to 3:30 pm; Thursday bridge sessions from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. Saturday free bridge classes, 10:15 am to 12:15 pm, for new and review students. Info: Donna at 459-9035. Tuesday evenings: "Dungeons and Dragons, the Adventurers' League," from 6 to 10 pm. Both newbies and experienced players, ages 13+, are welcome to join. Info: Dan at 972-3154. Saturday afternoons from 2 to 4:30 pm: Chess: bring your chess set and have some fun with friends. All ability levels welcome. Info: Raymond at 841-0473.

Life Wednesdays: Discussion and support group with Linda Posner, Wednesday from 10 to 11 am. Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Willits Community Drum Circle: 7 to 10 pm at the Saint Francis in the Redwoods Episcopal Church, 66 East Commercial Street. Every 2nd and 4th Friday. Free. Everyone is welcome. Info: 459-4932.

Smoking Cessation Program: Free "Freedom from Smoking" class sponsored by the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital. Every Wednesday at the MHM Conference Room, 1 Madrone Street, 6 to 7 pm. RSVP to Jennifer Barrett at 707-540-4208. Walk-ins are always welcome.

Free Sheriff's Activity League programs: at Body Works Gym, 1511 South Main Street. Teen gym: Monday to Friday from 2:30 to 5:30 pm; Boxing: Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7 pm; Karate: Kids aged 5 to 11 from 6 to 7 pm, Tweens, Teens and Adults at 7 pm. All SAL programs free to the public. Info: www.facebook.com/MendocinoCountySheriffsYouthActivitiesLeague or Mike Tobin: 354-0565.

Shanachie Pub: Open Mic every Wednesday and World Music Open Mic every Tuesday. 8 pm. Sign-ups start at 7 pm. Movie Night every Monday. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Karaoke Night at AI's Redwood Room: every Wednesday night, karaoke in the bar. 207 South Main Street. 459-2444.

Open Mic Jam at AI's Redwood Room: every Friday night, hosted by Dream Capsule Entertainment, featuring talented, established local musicians from all over Northern California. Jazz, Blues, Rock. No talent welcome. AI's Redwood Room, 207 South Main Street, starting at 9 pm. Mr. Larry's New Orleans Outside BBQ Café Catering serving at AI's on Fridays from 9 pm to 1:30 am. Questions? Call Mr. Larry: (707) 354-3197

Laytonville Winter Farmers Market: Mondays from 2:30 to 4:30 pm at Harwood Hall, 44400 Willis Avenue, Laytonville. Buy local: vegetables, juice, bakery, beef, lamb, pork, crafts, hot soup, baked goods, and more.

Ongoing Events

Willits Winter Farmers Market: from 3 to 5:30 pm every Thursday at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, with produce, local meats and fish, local grains, dinner, baked goods, gift items, chocolates, crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

The Emadal Chorale: this community chorus based in Willits is in its 20th season, and you are welcome to join! Every Wednesday from 5 to 6:30 pm. No auditions necessary. The Chorale meets upstairs at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street.

Free Classes for Girls: The Mentoring Network, under the umbrella of the Youth Grange, is offering free after-school classes on Friday afternoons, 3:30 to 4:30 pm, for girls in Willits area schools, grades 6 through 10. Classes will be on herbs one week, yoga another week, cooking and life skills. Room 4 of the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Questions: call Michelle at 972-1601. No pre-registration is necessary.

Free English class/Clase de ingles gratis: Every Thursday at 7 pm / Cada jueves a las 7 pm. At the LDS church, 265 Margie Drive. Info: 707-758-8709.

Willits Photography Club: meets at the Willits Art Center, 71 East Commercial Street, on the second Saturday of each month from 10 to 12 noon. All levels of experience welcome. Come to the back door of the Art Center.

Willits Frontier Twirlers: Monday night session at the Willits Center for the Arts. New beginner class runs from 7 to 8 pm, with dancing to follow from 8 to 9 pm. Singles and couples and all ages are welcome. Caller/teacher Lawrence Johnson. Singles and couples and all ages are welcome. \$20/month (to help pay the caller), with young dancer scholarships available. Questions? Contact Emmy Good at Emmy@pacific.net or Jenny Watts at Wattsup@gmail.com.

Junior Grange After-School Program: an after-school program for kids ages 5 to 14, Mondays from 3 to 6 pm at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, Room 10. Membership fee: \$1, plus \$1 annual dues. Info? Contact Zeynep at 707-972-8558 or zeyny34@yahoo.com.

Mondays at Wowser: Free events at the Wowser maker space, 330 East Commercial Street. 6:30 pm. Lectures, slide shows, flash videos, guest speakers, demonstrations. Info: 459-9697 or www.wowserilc.com.

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WILLITS FRONTIER DAYS

2015 Schedule of Events
Get entries & more info online: www.WillitsFrontierDays.com

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	COST
June 25	Thursday	5 pm	Hometown Celebration	Downtown Willits	Free to attend
		5 pm	Community Proj. Judging	Downtown Willits	Free to attend
June 26	Friday	6 pm	Truck Pulls	Jack Sharp Arena	\$14/Adult, \$5/Child
		9 pm	Street Dance	Rodeo Grounds	Free to attend
		6 pm	Carnival opens	Old Ball Fields	Tickets & Wristbands
June 27	Saturday	9 am	Gymkhana	Jack Sharp Arena	Free to attend
		10 am	National Anthem	Rodeo Grounds	Free to attend
June 28	Sunday	8 am	Horse Show	Jack Sharp Arena	Free to attend
		~	Sweetheart Judging	Jack Sharp Arena	Free to attend
July 3	Friday	5:30 pm	Waterlights	Humboldt & Commercial St	Free to attend
		7 pm	CCPRA Rodeo	Jack Sharp Arena	\$15/Box, \$12/Adult, \$5 Child
		9 pm	Western Dance	Rodeo Grounds	Free to attend
July 4	Saturday	9 am	Horseshoe Competition	Rec Grove	Free to attend
		11 am	Parade	Downtown Willits	Free to attend
		12 pm	Barbecue	Rec Grove	\$15/Adult, \$8 Child
		3 pm	Black Bart Gunfighters	Rec Grove	Free to attend
		4 pm	CCPRA Rodeo	Jack Sharp Arena	\$15/Box, \$12/Adult, \$5 Child
July 5	Sunday	7 am	Lions Pancake Breakfast	Rec Grove	\$8/Adult, \$5 Child
		10 am	Junior Rodeo	Jack Sharp Arena	\$5/Adult, Free/Child
		3 pm	Cowboy Poetry	Community Center	\$20/Adult, \$12 Child, 6-12

Find us on Facebook

Senior Center St. Patrick's Day Lunch

The Harrah Senior Center presents St. Patrick's Day Lunch, from 11:45 am to 1 pm, at 1501 Baechtel Road. Corned beef & cabbage, red potatoes, carrot salad, roll, soup, beverage & dessert. Seniors \$5.50; non-seniors \$7; kids \$3.50. Info: 459-6826.

10th Anniversary Now and Then Films

Thursday, March 19

Now and Then Film Series celebrates its 10th Anniversary starting at 7 pm, with a retrospective of shorts and highlights selected from the more than 100 documentaries shown over the last decade. "Catch a glimpse of energy and oil issues, water, food and farming, transportation, currency and other subjects of interest for our community resilience." Suggested donation: \$5 helps sustain the monthly film series, every third Thursday at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Organic popcorn, chocolate and refreshments for sale by the Grange. Info: 459-6362.



Sign up for the Willits Otters Swim Team

The 2015 Willits Otters Swim Team started signups for the 2015 swim season this week at the Willits City Pool, just north of Willits High School.

"Our seasonal swim team is for youths through high school ages. From the beginning swimmer to the most competitive skilled swimmer, our program provides the values of sportsmanship and team work." Regular practices are from 5 to 6:30 pm, Monday thru Friday. Sign-ups can be completed anytime during regular team practices.

"Our Willits Otters typically start the season the first week of March and end the season the last week in July. The Willits Otters Swim Team Board of Directors and Head Coach Lou Meier and his coaching staff are excited about the 2015 Swim Season. The pool is ready, new equipment is on hand, and the 2015 swim meet dates are scheduled. Bring a friend, register anytime during regular team practices.



Schindig St. Patrick's Day Party on March 17

Shanachie Pub: St. Paddy's "Proper" Party with Schindig. 8 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Free Healthy Lifestyle Classes

Adventist Health presents a series of free "Healthy Lifestyle" classes on the third Thursday evening of every month, through September 2015.

The classes, on health topics of interest to the general public, are from 6:30 to 7:30 pm at the 11 Oaks Conference Room, and have various presenters.

This month's class, Thursday, March 19, is titled "Moving Safely," and is presented by Heather Anderson, physical therapist. To register, call 456-3132.

'Still Alice' Thursday, March 19

This "sensitive and restrained look at early-onset Alzheimer's Disease" opens at the Noyo Theatre, at 4 pm on Thursday, March 19, for a week's run. Oscar winner Julianne Moore plays a linguistics professor "slowly disappearing within her own body" after she is diagnosed. A representative from the North Bay Office of the Alzheimer's Association will be at today's opening show, for a Q&A after the film. Plus an information table. Special \$5 admission for this 4 pm showing. Questions?: Sienna at 459-5621.

Little Lake Grange Pancake Breakfast

"Join your friends at the Grange Breakfast! 8 to 11 am Sunday, March 22 and every fourth Sunday at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. \$7 buys you a plate of the best 'scratch' pancakes and local farm eggs to be found. Choose our Sourdough Wholegrain or Hank's Famous Buttermilk Pancakes, Beeler's Quality Bacon, Organic Local Farm Fresh Eggs made to order, Real Butter, Juice, Organic Coffee or Tea." \$7, \$6 Seniors, \$4 children under 10. Extra sides of Organic Fruit in season, or Amish Maple Syrup \$1 each.



'



Little League Tryouts

T-ball to teenager: eager baseball fans try out for 2015 teams



Last weekend the ball fields on East Commercial Street were filled with excited, and even a little nervous, kiddos hoping to swing for the fences and gain a spot on a Willits Redwood Little League team this year.

Tryouts were held both Saturday and Sunday, and each kid had a chance to showcase their skills, or show their heart at catching, batting and more.

"It went really smooth this year," explained player agent Melissa Coughlin. "We had a lot of kids show up and try out this year, somewhere around 90 kids over the two days - and they were all ready and excited to play ball!"

Though they are officially called "tryouts," all the kids who come are placed on teams for the season. The purpose of the pre-team event is to help the coaches spread the strengths and talents across all the teams, hoping to create a good, even and competitive set of teams.

"We try, but sometimes, you never know," laughed Coughlin. "Some of them surprise you throughout the season and show strengths you didn't get to see in the tryout period!"

There were a few first-timers trying out this year, but many were returning players from previous seasons who were looking to move up the ranks and into the older, or more challenging, divisions.

The divisions are basically guidelines for ages, but some younger kids go higher if they have the skillset to hold their own, or older kids might start a little lower if this is their first season or they are still working on their skills. T-ball starts around age 4, Machine Pitch is around ages 6 to 8, Minors are from around 8 to 11, and Majors around 10 to 12. There is also a Junior League for kids in their early teens.

The drafts - where all kids get shuffled onto teams and matched with a coach - were held Monday night.

"We're pretty full," explained Coughlin. "It looks like it will be a great upcoming season this year."

The official schedule of games is still being set, but Coughlin noted ball should be starting around the second week of April.

"We are always looking for umpires, score keepers and volunteers for the Snack Shack," said Coughlin. "If anyone is interested in helping out, please let us know."

For more information, please call Coughlin at 354-2226, or Willits Redwood Little League president Clint Jewell is available at 354-1533.

- Maureen Moore

Above, left and right: Players during the Saturday tryouts have fun at bat and making catches in the outfield. Above, center: Some of the boys who came to the tryouts Saturday afternoon; back row, left to right: Ethan, Christian, Don and Jack; front row, left to right: Jace, Nick, Aydin, Cruz, Stevie and Mark.

Below, at left: Jace connects with the ball over home plate. Below, from top: One of the youngsters aims for the ball. Ethan swings over home plate. Willits Redwood Little League President Clint Jewell loads the balls into the pitching machine on the mound.

Photos by Maureen Moore



ESTATE SALE SERVICE or LIQUIDATION SALES

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Restless Heart Friday, April 3 Doors 7pm | Show 8pm Tickets Starting at \$35

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JOHN FORD RANCH RANCH RAISED NATURAL BEEF No hormones, pastured in Willits, California

8TH ANNUAL chili COOK OFF Friday March 6TH 5:30-7 p.m. Adults - \$8 • Kids - \$6 Members - \$7

WEF's Drive-Through Tri Tip Dinner this weekend Prep is underway for the 2015 Willits Educational Foundation's drive-through Tri-Tip dinner that will once again aim to raise money for area schools with a tasty dinner to go.

Willits Weekly CLASSIFIEDS 30 Words | \$10 | 2 Weeks Algebra, Geometry SAT & ACT Test Prep Mac Smith 459-MATH

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The rest of Fitness From Page 3

until you find the ones that are more fun than work.

Make exercise part of your routine

Now that you have found programs that you enjoy, how do you get yourself to do them consistently? Instead of exercise just being something on your to-do list, make it part of your day, like brushing your teeth or getting dressed.

According to a study published in the European Journal of Social Psychology, researcher Philippa Lally and her team found it took 96 people over a 12-week period an average of two months before a new behavior becomes a habit - 66 days to be exact.

Use the buddy system

Even with the perfect exercise routine for you, at the right time, your motivation may waiver. When your slippers are more comfy than your sneakers, a workout partner can get you back on track.

The moral of the story is to give yourself a break: being fit and healthy is a daily process. It's not going to happen overnight. It takes time to turn those resolutions into habits.

Erin Fitzpatrick is a licensed Zumba instructor. She is a lifelong fitness advocate, marathoner and dancer. She began teaching fitness classes two years ago and is a co-owner of Energize Willits. You can learn more at Facebook.com/EnergizeWillits.

COLUMN | Resendez Reads!

'My Life in Middlemarch'

Do you have a favorite novel? A book that you could re-read tomorrow and find a new level of meaning and enjoyment within its pages?

That's the relationship that author Rebecca Mead has with her favorite novel, "Middlemarch" by George Eliot. Mead, raised in England but living in the U.S., rekindles her love of literature with a pilgrimage to British locations linked to George Eliot's life and writings, then records it all in a charming memoir titled "My Life in Middlemarch" (2014).

As soon as I started reading Mead, I picked up a used copy of "Middlemarch" (Penguin Edition) and read back and forth between the books. The novel was originally published serially in eight volumes starting in 1871, so Mead organizes her book in eight corresponding chapters.

Mead shows us the relationship between historical context, a great author's flight of imagination, and the reader's connection with story. Her writing is straightforward and never feels like a classroom lecture.

COLUMN | Linda on the law

A guide to jury service

It's arrived. That distinctive envelope that oozes gut-wrenching energy. I've got jury duty. Didn't I just receive one of these? How do I get out of it? Will I be able to find a babysitter? Maybe the trial will be cancelled.

This is a normal reaction to something that upsets the natural flow of our lives and puts us in a situation where: (1) we have to sit too close to other people; (2) in a somber courtroom that is sometimes too hot or too cold; (3) while answering confusing and obscure questions posed by confusing and obscure people called lawyers; (4) with our answering voices echoing in a room full of mostly strangers; (5) and our daily lives interrupted; (6) for \$12 a day plus mileage.

Hey, maybe we could just eliminate the jury system! Like some places in the world, we could give that responsibility to a mad person wielding a sword. Of course, I'm not serious, but it may be important to remember at this point that the jury system is the basis of a democratic society.

In a criminal case, our society recognizes the rights of "the people" as well as "the individual." The prosecutor represents "the people," while the defense attorney represents "the individual." The jurors, in a sense, are both "the people" and "the individual," deciding whether the prosecution has proven the charges against the defendant.

If you believe that being a juror is something you can handle both physically and emotionally, and you are chosen for the job, then you will have to follow the rules for jury service read to you by the judge, given to you in writing, and discussed by the attorneys in their closing arguments.

That's a lot harder than it sounds. When our society decided that an individual cannot be found guilty unless the people prove the charges beyond a reasonable doubt, it made very clear the importance of individual rights. It requires time, energy and devotion to fulfill the job of a juror.

There are few really great experiences in one's life, things that are majestic or astounding and never forgotten. I know I'm waving the flag a little here, but jury service allows you to be a part of the system in action. Being a juror is a hard-earned right.

You will find people on the jury who just want to go home, who don't want to follow the rules, and who made up their minds about a verdict long before reaching the courthouse. That does not have to be you. Take it easy, be respectful to the other jurors, analyze the evidence, and treat the matter as if YOU were sitting in the defendant's chair placing your trust into each individual on the jury.

Linda McNeil is an attorney with more than 35 years legal experience. Since 1992 she's been practicing in Mendocino and Lake counties, with an office in Willits. Her practice is limited to representing drivers before the DMV and representing people accused of DUI. The California DUI Lawyers Association has designated her a "DUI & DMV Specialist."

Willits Harrah Center Serving the Seniors of our Community 8TH ANNUAL chili COOK OFF Friday March 6TH 5:30-7 p.m. Adults - \$8 • Kids - \$6 Members - \$7

ALFRED F. KERR, D.D.S. FAMILY DENTISTRY OFFICE HOURS By APPOINTMENT 12 W. VALLEY STREET WILLITS, CA 95490

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BROOKSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIAL KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DAYS Wednesday, March 25 and Thursday, March 26 from 8:00-4:30

ALFRED F. KERR, D.D.S. FAMILY DENTISTRY OFFICE HOURS By APPOINTMENT 12 W. VALLEY STREET WILLITS, CA 95490

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



'Complementary Artists'

March show at the Willits Center for the Arts

An elegantly arranged gallery of multimedia artwork awaits visitors to the March show at the Willits Center for the Arts, opening with an artists' reception this Saturday from 7 to 9 pm.

Many of the nine artists featured in the "Complementary Artists" exhibit took last semester's Art Marketing class taught by Alyssum Weir at Mendocino College.

A visit Tuesday afternoon found beautiful ceramic and sculptural pieces sitting atop white pedestals and on shelves; paintings and photographs waiting to be hung; and clothing designed by Jasmin Hancock, the youngest artist in the show, pinned up on the wall.

"Most of us are students," said Gabee Vallejos-Permenter, who organized the show for the WCA, and is showing her gorgeous raku bowls. "Most of us have never shown before, and we are all very excited. We have wonderful teachers at Mendocino College, and we are very thankful to our community, to the Willits Art Center for hosting us, and to the college."

The nine artists in the show are Alberto Lozano, Angella Leal, Danna NicDarrah, Dawn NicDarrah, Gabriela Vallejos-Permenter, Jamie Blumenthal, Jasmine Hancock, Rachel Vanderpool, and Robert Permenter.

Many of Alberto Lozano's ceramic pieces are in a soft palette of natural colors like stones, bark or roots: on display are textured sculptural pieces that could function as tea cups, plates and platters, boxes and sake sets, if they didn't seem almost too beautiful to use. Lozano, a Ukiah High School graduate working on an associate degree in ceramics at Mendocino

College, won the College Foundation's Mary Oosting Scholarship in 2012, to support students who are highly motivated to create visual art. He is planning to transfer to Sacramento State University next fall.

The show also features a mother (Dawn NicDarrah) and daughter (Danna NicDarrah) duo, showing ceramic works, paintings and photography. Their Facebook page, NicDarrah Arts & Marketing, features works by both artists. One of Dawn's sculptural pieces is a reproduction of the Haniwa Dancing Man, a 7th century Japanese figurine. Placed near it at the WCA is Danna's recreation of the famed Venus of Willendorf from the Paleolithic period, around 25,000 years BC, and her vase with the triskele, or triple spiral, Celtic symbol. A glass case displays several shelves of "Shaman Shakers," beautiful shakers in the shape of acorns in various sizes by Dawn.

A glass piece by Jamie Blumenthal in the shape of a curved piano keyboard strikes a more modern note, but the raised, usually black, keys are in shades of blue and colors that look like abalone shell or even jade. A vertical glass piece by Blumenthal has abstract shapes in shades of green that could be a landscape with hills and mountains and birds.

Fashion designer Jasmine Hancock, aka Princess Jazzy of Jazzy Designs, is studying administrative justice at Mendocino College, after graduating from River Oak Charter School. The clothes she is displaying in the show include tops, skirts, dresses, handbags, and more, in a wide range of colors and fabrics, from casual, to work-ready and glamorous attire. One dressy two-piece outfit has a red satin corset with black lace overlay and hand-stitched lace trimming,



accompanying with a lace skirt. A black and pink tailored vest has pink buttons. On opening night of the "Complementary Artists" show, Hancock will be doing a small runway show featuring her clothes. You can see more of Hancock's custom clothing at the Jazzy Designs page on Facebook.

"Complementary Artists" runs through March 29 at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Opening reception is 7 to 9 pm on Saturday, March 7. Art displayed in this show will be for sale. Gallery hours are Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 7 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 3 pm.



More of Goals | From Page 1

Results were: Main Street downtown planning and post-bypass planning (8 votes), bike and pedestrian improvements, rails and trails (6 votes), attracting industry and economic development (6 votes), a strategy to avoid economic loss from the bypass (7 votes), and pickleball and tennis courts (7 votes). Pickleball is a racquet game that's a cross between badminton, tennis, and ping pong.

Workshop leader Bill Stalter brought a career of public finance experience to the talk. Stalter's words to council members and the community were much like those of a motivational speaker.

Stalter talked about a practical budget that can make a difference to the community. "At the end of the day, there is only one way to eat an elephant - one bite at a time," he said.

Stalter, who spoke at the beginning of the 4 pm meeting, explained the process to prioritize and rank major city goals, and that this workshop was just the beginning.

"Time is limited; money is limited: Let us focus on the most important thing," he said.

The leading five topics surpassed most of the other ideas by a strong margin. Emergency preparedness or the Railroad Avenue extension, for example, received one or two votes.

The voting was the second part of the workshop. Before that city officials talked about the city's books, and two consultants hired to do the workshop advised on the process of setting budget goals.

Monday's budget work party complemented an existing list of goals that the council set in place in 2013.

Major city goals from the last go-around of goal-setting were: Baechtel Road/Railroad Avenue extension, Brown's Corner intersection, cross certification of sewer and water plant operators, traffic west of Main Street, Main Street waterline, post-bypass planning, set street paving priorities, and master plans for both sewer and water infrastructure.

"The city does not start this process with a blank piece of paper," Stalter said.

The goal-setting process determines goals as well as other lists of objectives to address as resources permit.

On the old lists, longterm water supply options including groundwater, the Boy Scout lake, and

Read the rest of Goals | Over on Page 12

The rest of Errors | From Page 1

has had to reimburse the state numerous times in the past, and Cryer herself has appealed past auditing decisions handed down by the state. She intends to challenge this most recent decision, too.

"We will appeal it. We are going to fight this again," Cryer said. "We have fought it before, and we were successful, and I am hopeful we will be successful again."

Cryer said the state claims the county made numerous errors in how it apportioned administrative costs in the bills the Mental Health Department submitted for reimbursement.

The county privatized mental health delivery in 2013, so these audit exceptions are from the days when the county provided services to mental health clients directly.

In remarks to the board of supervisors, Cryer explained the accounting principles governing the state's Medicaid auditors are not immovable and abstract, but rather subject to interpretation.

"It is hard to predict what will happen on these audits," Cryer said. "Two different auditors can audit the same county, in the same years, and you can get different audits. You can also get two different auditors auditing different counties that are doing the same thing, and

get different audits. You can get an audit exception one year, you change your practice, you submit an audit the next year ... and get penalized because a different auditor wanted you to do it the way you did it the previous year.

"Mental health is a broken system," Cryer said. "It's broken throughout the country, and throughout the state, and it's broken in all the counties."

County CEO Carmel Angelo said the executive office will hire an outside firm to audit the billing history and financial reports from the suspect years.

Because of other unforeseen expenses that are attributable to the mental health branch of HHS in the current fiscal year, Cryer said, the mental health branch will be coming in an additional \$700,000 over its projected budget. That means the department will be \$4.6 million "in the red" for 2014-15.

Cryer told supervisors the Health and Human Services Agency will cover the shortfall from its own budget.

Otherwise, looking good County Executive Office staff gave a relatively optimistic report to supervisors on the state of the 2014-15 budget. Much of the talk was focused on factors affecting local economic

The rest of Gym | From Page 1

of Willits High sports programs. Many criticized Ritchley's policy.

As a result of the policy, one high school dance has been cancelled due to a lack of students willing to attend the event. According to students present at the Thursday evening discussion, several school rallies have been cancelled as well.

In addition, said sports supporter Bonnie Riley, the "no food" policy has hurt snack bar sales during basketball games, which has curtailed funding that the snack bar has traditionally provided to the basketball program.

Paul Riley, who has coached for 18 years at Willits High, urged Ritchley to change his policy. "You have to draw a line in the sand. Fine. You draw the line, you respect it - but you have to use the gym," Riley said. "We need to get past the food thing. Otherwise, these teams are not going to survive."

One of the assumptions that apparently drove Ritchley's policy was in error, it was learned during the discussion. Previously, Ritchley had told students that violation of the recommendations made by the company that refinished the floor would result in cancellation of the warranty, which would mean the district would have to pay if the company had to return to perform maintenance work on the floor. Ritchley had insisted if students followed his policy, any maintenance work would be free of charge.

However, in reality, the district will have to pay some \$3,000 a year to the company to have them come back once a year, for next 10 years, whether the floor is lightly or heavily used. However, if the floor is heavily used, and if that use results in damage to the floor, the company will have to do more work to restore the floor and the cost will likely rise above \$3,000.

Ritchley said the information he had received previously was incorrect, and he had only been told the correct information two weeks ago.

Ritchley's gym floor policy is having a negative effect on the school, said Rebecca Smith. "This is killing the spirit of the school, tremendously," she said. "It needs to be looked at."

A woman present at the meeting told Ritchley

the policy of keeping the doors on the west side of the gym closed during practices was a poor decision. "The fact that both sets of doors can't be opened is very frustrating," she said. "There's no cross-ventilation. That means it's darned hot in that gym."

Ritchley said the westside doors had to be closed because they open onto a parking lot where there are lots of rocks. People walking into the gym from that side would inadvertently pick up rocks in their shoes, whether they were wearing gym shoes or not, he said, and that could damage the floor.

Bonnie Riley urged Ritchley to get creative. "You could have an open door with a screen there. That would let the air in. Or you could have someone sitting there to keep people out."

Ritchley agreed it would be possible to install a barrier of some kind. He mentioned a "strap barrier," similar to the kind traditionally used to make aisles in banks and movie theaters.

During discussions, some previously fuzzy points were clarified. When told that school coaches were unclear if the baseball teams could use the gym to hold practice during rainy weather, Ritchley told one baseball coach they could. Nancy Runberg added players were not to wear cleats in the gym, which brought a chuckle from the group. Another coach asked if the gym would be off-limits to summer sports. Ritchley replied the gym could be used for summer sports, if a coach was present.

Ritchley also told the group school custodial staff had recently cleaned the mats traditionally used to cover the gym floor during non-sports activities, such as dances. He affirmed the mats were going to be used during a school dance at the gym that week.

Ritchley said he was planning to rewrite the gym floor policy, and would submit it to district Superintendent Patricia Johnson, who attended the meeting.

But Johnson replied any changes would be "a school site policy. We don't have a district policy on gym floor use."

The rest of LAFCO | From Page 1

The 96-page document examines current conditions within five county fire protection districts: Little Lake, Long Valley, Covelo, Leggett, and Hopland.

All the districts suffer from community apathy, according to the review prepared by LAFCO analyst Craig Baracco and Mary Ann Mix of MPE Inc. consulting.

Not one of the five fire districts has held a contested election within the last five years. Instead, all district board members have been appointed by the board of supervisors.

The districts have five-member boards - except Long Valley, which can only muster three directors.

And the Hopland Rural Fire Protection District has filled only four of its five seats.

The terms of three of the five members of the Little Lake district's board will expire this December. The remaining two board members serve until December 2017.

"There's a lack of candidates for these positions," Willits Councilwoman Holly Madrigal, who sits on the commission, said. "We need to encourage more people to apply."

Her conclusion is echoed throughout the report.

The towns within all five fire protection districts are considered disadvantaged unincorporated communities, meaning their median household income falls below 80 percent of the state average of \$61,632. That includes Willits, even though it's an incorporated city, whose median income in 2013 was \$34,466, a tad less than 60 percent of the state average.

Compared to other north county towns, Willits is comparatively well off. Covelo's median income of \$24,750 was just slightly more than 40 percent of the state average. Leggett managed somewhat better; the 2012 median income there was \$28,068 in 2013, 45.5 percent of the state average.

County Auditor Lloyd Were told supervisors he estimated the county would bring in about \$316,000 more than it did last year, for total revenues of \$62,850,000. The Executive Office team added that even with the huge losses attributable to the Mental Health branch, county departments would leave a projected fund balance of \$859,541 at the end of fiscal 2014-15.

Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde told the board he had calculated county revenues were increasing at a rate of 1.4 percent per year for the past two years. "While that's nice, it's not enough to handle inflation, and other economic pressures," Gjerde said.

Located in the geographical center of Mendocino County, along the Highway 101 corridor, the Little Lake Fire Protection District serves an area of some 239 square miles, providing both structure and wildland fire protection, emergency medical services, rescue and extrication, hazardous materials response, and fire prevention services to Willits and Little Lake Valley, including Ridgewood, Irumulco, Hearst, Tomki, Pine Mountain, and String Creek, as well as both Highway 101 and Highway 20, some Bureau of Land Management acreage on the eastern edge of the district, and a small part of Jackson State Demonstration Forest on the district's western boundary.

Some 10,000 people live within the district's boundaries, almost half of them in the city of Willits. Brooktrails, which has its own fire department, lies outside the district, but there is an automatic aid agreement between the two departments. The district also maintains mutual aid agreements with Laytonville, Redwood Valley and CalFire.

Compared to other north county fire districts, the LLFPD is well-staffed. It enjoys a full-time paid fire chief, deputy fire chief, battalion/training chief, and an administrative assistant. Its 39 volunteer firefighters, who range in age from 18 to 56, include 17 emergency medical technicians, and the remainder of the volunteers are all trained first-responders.

They're needed. In 2013, the district responded to 600 calls, of which some 73 percent were either medical emergencies or traffic accidents, according to the MSR.

And while the district brought in just over \$1 million in revenue in fiscal year 2012-2013, mostly from property taxes and property assessments, it spent almost \$700,000. District revenues increased more than \$158,000 over the previous fiscal year as a result of an outreach program to raise money to build a new fire station and funds paid to the district's strike team, which is reimbursed for responding to wildfires under mutual aid agreements with CalFire and the U.S. Forest Service. However,

according to the LAFCO study, the majority of those mutual aid wildland fire responses, some 50 calls in 2013, go uncompensated.

The district also receives about \$1,750 annually from the Sherwood Valley Indian Rancheria Casino, and the nonprofit Little Lake Firefighters Association holds fundraisers throughout the year to raise money for new fire equipment, fire station improvements, and training aids. Along with the Willits Rotary Club, the firefighters typically raise about 3 percent of the district's annual budget expenditures.

The greatest challenge facing the department, according to the MSR, is replacement of the district's main station on East Commercial Street. Built in 1952, the concrete block building originally housed city administrative offices and the police department, as well as the fire department. The fire district's administrative offices are still located there, as are four fire engines, and a meeting room and kitchen used by the Firefighter's Association.

The flat-roofed building is not reinforced to withstand earthquakes, according to the report, and the district maintains it must be replaced or upgraded within the next five years.

The fire district has been trying to replace the building with a new station for the last six to seven years.

In 2005, it secured a U.S. Department of Agriculture loan. But the money was contingent on passing a special tax, which would raise the current property assessment by \$14 per unit. The election failed; however, the district continues to try to raise funds to replace the station.

The good news is that an unstaffed Baechtel Road substation - which houses additional fire apparatus and equipment - is in good shape, according to the MSR. The metal building, constructed around 1986, has a modular classroom and a training tower.

Within city limits, there are few problems, the study reports. Fire services in communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office, an advisory organization, and indicate the general adequacy of coverage, with rankings from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel, receive a rating of 1.

Within the city and in adjacent areas, the district has an ISO rating of 4. That's because the city maintains 298 fire hydrants in town and along major roads. However, the ISO rating rises to 8 in outlying areas within five miles of the district's fire stations, and to 10 beyond the five-mile limit.

Response times also worsen the farther from town you live: from four minutes within city limits and adjacent areas, to 40 minutes in outlying rural areas. Which means residents of Pine Mountain Estates, Ridgewood, and the String Creek subdivision pay through the nose for fire insurance.

Within district boundaries there are also BLM lands, state lands, and a large wildlife habitat at the north end of the valley, the MSR notes: "Due to the district's high fire risk, there is a strong need for planning requirements more stringent than those currently used by the county Planning and Building Department or imposed by California Public Resources Code...."

According to the LAFCO study, the district's current facilities are considered "marginal to adequately serve current demand for fire protection services. Any future growth within the district will require new facilities and equipment to serve the area."

And while the fire district says current financing levels are adequate to maintain current levels of services "for several more years," there is not enough funding to "accommodate an additional need for expansion of medical response services" and to train additional fulltime paid personnel." It adds the district also needs additional volunteer firefighters in order to respond to daytime calls.

Overall, the MSR states, "the district manages to function on limited revenues," while utilizing "unspent funds for equipment and firehouse improvements."

It's a theme the study found time and again as it examined challenges faced by north county fire districts.

Willits Weekly will examine those other districts in next week's issue.

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Photo by Sandy Strong

Cedar Waxwings

A Cedar Waxwing enjoys the water in Sandy Strong's backyard garden in Willits. "I took this photo about six weeks ago," Strong said. "The Cedar Waxwings come to my yard twice a year on their migrations north and south, looking for berries, eating figs, drinking water, and hanging out for a couple of days. This time there were about 25 of them."

Cedar Waxwings are named for the red wax-like tips on their wings, and because their diet includes cedar cones, as well as fruit and insects. The red feather tips increase in number and size as the birds get older. Other field marks include a pale yellow wash across the belly and a bright yellow band on the tip of the tail. Cedar Waxwings are one of the few North American birds that specialize in eating fruit and can survive on fruit alone for several months.

To learn more about these beautiful birds, visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website at www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/cedar_waxwing.

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The rest of **Goals** | From Page 11

raising the dam at Morris Lake were other important objectives.

One of the questions city council members and officials are wondering about is how much gasoline tax revenue will diminish when the bypass opens.

"Gas prices are creeping up, but this is something to think about," councilwoman Holly Madrigal said.

Mayor Bruce Burton brought up the city's pending contributions to unfunded retirement.

"That is an off-book liability that is going to hop on the books," Burton said, "We do not

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

Escareno then turned the weapon on the two men, told them he was going to kill them, and pulled the trigger several times, says sheriff's Lt. Greg Stefani. But the firearm malfunctioned and did not discharge. Escareno fled, but was later stopped on Highway 162 in Covelo by a Fish and Wildlife warden. Deputies seized two handguns and a spent cartridge case from Escareno's vehicle. One of the guns matched the description of the weapon used in the assault, and the spent cartridge case matched the handgun's caliber, Stefani noted. Escareno was booked into county jail. Bail was set at \$125,000.

This report was based on a press release from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

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

popular preschool.

The building was deemed unsafe to enter by the city. The property was also issued a notice of nuisance and must have permits by March 12. According to the Mendocino Air Quality Management District, asbestos can appear in buildings in many ways – for example, from old linoleum, taping compounds or insulation.

"I cannot issue permits until I have an asbestos release from the AQMD," Sherman said.

A 31-year-old Willits woman, Lacey Ross, faces charges in connection with the fire, but a court found she was not competent to stand trial.

know what sales tax is coming."

At the city, help with planning comes from a planner hired on a contract basis from the county planning department.

"We do not have a city planner – that is one of those key roles," Madrigal said. "If there are not people at the city to physically do the work, that is a challenge."

Between now and a second goal-setting meeting set for March 28 from 9 am to noon, council members will be reviewing information and comments from the meeting.

Supes proclaim March as **Women's History Month**

Noting that women "of every race, class and social background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our county," the board of supervisors proclaimed

March as "Women's History Month" in Mendocino County, honoring six individual women for the contributions they have made locally and, in one case, nationally.

The proclamation noted women "have played and will continue to play a significant role in every sphere of the life of Mendocino County by constituting a significant portion of the labor force, working both inside and outside the home, including unique roles throughout county history by providing the majority of the volunteer force particularly important in the establishment of charitable, humanitarian and cultural institutions [in] the county."

The board proclamation noted that four women's organizations in the county, the Mendocino Women's Political Coalition, the American Association of University Women-Ukiah, the Ukiah Saturday Afternoon Club, and Soroptimist International, have honored five women for their contributions to local cultural and civil life: sheep rancher Jean Near; educator, environmentalist and volunteer Cathy Monroe; scholar and historian Victoria Patterson; and Leslie Dahlhoff and Merita Whatley, who led the effort to have the Point Arena area Stornetta Public Lands declared a national monument.

Supervisors also recognized nationally and internationally known singer and political activist Holly Near, recently named a Women's History Month national honoree.

A celebration of Women's History Month, and of the six women from Mendocino County singled out for recognition this year, will be held in Ukiah this Sunday, March 8, at the Saturday Afternoon Club, 107 South Oak Street. Festivities begin at noon.

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