

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

Boosters Club interest

To the Editor:

I would like to thank all the people who came to the March meeting of the Willits High School Booster Club. Thank you for your interest. It was exciting to see so many interested people and to hear the great ideas you all had. As we said last night, our regularly held meeting is the second Thursday of the month, with the next meeting scheduled for April 13 at 6 pm, at the WHS Food Center.

We postponed the election of a new chair and board members to vacant seats until the May 11, 2017 meeting. Same place and time. Please spread the word!

We also look forward to seeing everybody at the upcoming April 15 Booster Club fundraiser, Cupcake Wars. Anyone interested in entering the competition – entry forms are due March 31 – should call Christy Wisdom or Jennifer Barrett at 459-7700.

Bridgett Summers, Willits

Drop-in cat spay and neuter day

To the Editor:

The Ukiah Animal Shelter is hosting a Feline Spay and Neuter Extravaganza for low-income, stray and feral cats on Tuesday, March 21. The shelter will accept up to three cats per person, dropped off between 7 and 9 am. Cats can be picked up between 3 and 5 pm. No appointment is necessary.

Cats need to come in their own individual cat carriers, and feral cats must be in traps. Financial assistance will be available to cover the cost of spay or neuter surgery plus a rabies vaccine.

The shelter's goal for this event is to sterilize 50 cats, thereby reducing the kitten births just this year by at least 150!

The Ukiah shelter is located at 298 Plant Road. Questions? Call 467-6453.

Sage Mountainfire,
Ukiah Animal Shelter

Frank Grasse Dog Park improvements

To the Editor:

The Frank Grasse Dog Park has just gotten more enjoyable for the people who bring their dogs to romp in the dog park.

Thanks to the financial generosity of the late Wellington "Mac" McClellan, two sturdy picnic tables and a comfortable bench have been purchased and installed in the park.

Mac McClellan's kindness has also been complemented by the generosity of local businesses, who added their support to this improvement at the dog park.

Northern Aggregates, who operates the Harris Quarry and has been generous to the park in the past, donated and delivered 15 yards of gravel to create a firm and dry footing for the benches and tables under the shade structures.

Sparetime Supply received the bulky delivery of the table and bench parts on behalf of the dog park. It further held the delivery at its San Francisco Street yard, while the rains poured and prevented construction. When the weather cleared and work could begin, Sparetime trucked the parts to the dog park with a forklift.

John Wagenet moved the tons of gravel with his tractor, while Capability Brown Landscaping cleared the construction site, compacted the gravel, and assembled the tables and benches.

Throughout the construction process, the dogs seemed very nonchalant about the whole thing. But their owners thought differently, only too glad to have a place to sit and relax while their dogs ran free and safe.

A great little park was just made better.

Thank you Mac McClellan, Northern Aggregates and Sparetime Supply.

Louis Rohlicek, Willits

The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters focusing on Willits and 3rd District issues, activities, events and people have priority. Willits Weekly prints letters from residents of Willits and the 3rd District only. To encourage a variety of voices, Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once a month.

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
A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

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journalists, and water protectors to camp, hospital stays, court dates, supply runs, and more.

Water protectors' morale has been beaten down by continued militarized law enforcement. Guests, strong in prayer and peaceful in conviction, are struggling with the trauma inflicted on them by malicious state powers violently enforcing corporate privatized profits building and defending DAPL.

We stand together united for indigenous sovereignty and to bring an end to the greedy trashing of our commons.

Hana Haas, Laytonville

Thank you

To the Editor:

To the Willits community and surrounding areas: A big thank you to the sponsors, supporters, and attendees of the March 5 event, Tommy Castro and the Painkillers, to benefit the Willits FFA.

I would like to say thank you to our amazing sponsors; Brad Walton CPA, George's Geodes and Gems, Moon Lady & Moon Man, and Sparetime Supply.

We would also like to thank the following people and organizations for their generous donations and contributions: Annette & Maddie Pinon, Grocery Outlet of Willits, Kemmy's Pie's, Mariposa Market, Moon Lady & Moon Man, Pooba, Re-Evolution, Sparetime Supply, Sue Clark, Sue Soave, Tamar Distillery, WHS ag teacher Kelly Case-Brackett and her daughter Claire, Willits FFA members and their parents, Willits Frontier Days, Willits Furniture, and Willits Weekly.

Thank you to the following business for being official ticket outlets for the benefit: Main Street Music of Willits, and Dig Music in Ukiah.

I would especially like to thank the Riley Family for all of their time and efforts, and generous contributions.

Marie Blancas,
event coordinator, Willits

Thank you

To the Editor:

There are many businesses and individuals to whom we are most grateful for helping to make our recent Sober Grad Pancake Breakfast a resounding success. First, many thanks to the Grange kitchen staff for their delicious breakfast, for the use of their space, and for all the other support they gave us. Also, thanks to US Foods, Long Valley Market, Mariposa Market, Pleasant View Dairy, Brown's Corner, Grocery Outlet, Old Mission Pizza, Raley's, Carmen Thomas and Barbie Svendsen for their donations of food and goods.

A huge thanks to Heidi Adhers and Ralph Mandeville for co-chairing this event. Thanks to Annette Pinon of Flowers by Annette for the table decorations, the raffle basket and everything else she always contributes. More thanks to Rachel Cash, Angi Edgar, Sandi Young, Maggie Bertolino-Haley, Angie Titus, and Trey Lynn Grant for their help with the breakfast and/or set-up.

Thank you to all of the seniors who came in and waited and bused tables, helped with

set-up and clean-up, and/or sold tickets. You were great! This Class of 2017 has been the most involved and helpful; we could not do it without you!

There are also thanks due to the many businesses and individuals who made our valentine's raffle basket so successful: Cat's Meow, Flowers by Annette, Rhonda Vannorsdel, Disneyland, Howard Memorial Hospital, El Mexicano, La Siciliana Italian Restaurant and Pizzeria, Main Street Music, and Les Schwab. Thanks also to Sheri Lovell for her donations and for keeping the basket moving through town. Congratulations to Bill Wilson, the winner of this basket! We appreciate all of you who purchased tickets. We could not put on a successful party without you! Thanks again to all.

Joyce Waters, secretary, Willits
Sober Grad Party Committee

Free Healthier Living Workshops

To the Editor:

Maintaining our health as we age takes additional management skills. Do you want more control in your life? Do you or does someone you know suffer from a chronic disease, such as diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure, chronic pain or depression? Are you a caregiver of someone that has a chronic illness?

Avenues to Wellness is once again offering the free, six-week Healthier Living Workshop series. These workshops are taught worldwide under the name of "Chronic Disease Self-Management." Workshops are currently scheduled for Willits starting on April 4; Laytonville starting on April 19, and Redwood Valley starting on May 2. Pre-registration is required, so call today!

These 2.5 hour sessions are held weekly at various community locations. Classes are facilitated by two leaders that attended a four-day, Stanford-approved training. Sessions focus on goal-setting, problem solving, and strategizing ways to reduce pain, fatigue, anxiety and stress. Classes will also include tips to better manage your health, information on healthy eating, and how to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine.

The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program was developed through a collaboration between Stanford University and the Northern California Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program. Results of a five-year study found that people who took this program, when compared to people who did not take the program, improved their healthful behaviors (exercise, cognitive symptom management, coping and communications with physicians), improved their health status (self-reported health, fatigue, disability, social/role activities and health distress), and decreased their days in the hospital.

To register for this local, free six-week workshop, call Avenues to Wellness at 456-9676.

Doreen Blumenfeld,
Avenues to Wellness, Willits

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Willits Weekly
EST. 2013

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Above, left: At the end of the 5th annual Farmers Convergence, participants gathered to hear "The Pleasures of Eating" by Wendell Berry, read by Doug Mosel from the Mendocino Grain Project. Above, right: A lunch of garden fresh kale salad, coconut curry, rice pilaf and dal was served. At right: "Find Your Niche" panelists, from left, Irene Engber from Irene's Garden, Ana Cox from Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese, Casey O'Neill from HappyDay Farms, Colleen Rentsch of Seely's Farm, Michael Foley from Green Uprising Farm, and Melanie MacTavish from Nye Ranch, share their experiences with the gathering. Below: Participants at the Farmers Convergence at Ridgewood Ranch broke into groups to talk about what they're doing now and what they'd like the local food movement to look like in five years.



Above: Nichole Patton from Nature's Tune in Point Arena talks about the new connections she made at the convergence.

At left, from top: Eva King from the School of Adaptive Agriculture and Jason Pluck from Black Dog Catering get treats ready for the morning break. Linda MacElwee and Torrey Douglass at the Mendocino County Food Guide table. Cameron Crockett from Fortunate Farm talks about food as medicine and "healing ourselves with healthy foods."

At bottom, from left: Caroline Radice of Black Dog Catering, with her perfectly spiced and delicious Coconut Curry. Rain Tenaqiya, an ag instructor at Mendocino College, discusses "Why Use Perennials?" Megan Isaacs from Fortunate Farm in Caspar celebrated her birthday at the convergence.

Photos by Ree Slocum



Farmers Convergence

5th annual conference brings the local food movement together

Last week the rain took a breather at just the right time for the 5th annual Farmers Convergence at Ridgewood Ranch. The sun was shining as farmers, ranchers, market owners, restaurant buyers and food enthusiasts from all over Northern California gathered to talk shop. North Coast Opportunities, a community action group based in Ukiah, organizes the convergence. NCO is the lead agency for many programs including Healthy Start, Leadership

Mendocino, and Lake County recovery funds just to name a few, but they are also heavily invested in "community wellness," and that is where the Farm Convergence comes in.

The theme of this year's conference was "Know Your Niche," and a panel of local farmers from Lake and Mendocino counties described the unique aspects of their individual farms. Panelists took turns sharing how they got their start, the size of their farms, the business style they use, and the markets they sell to.

Irene Engber of Irene's Garden in Laytonville told her story and described how she grew the size of her farm to over 10 acres with years of steady investment. She tells the aspiring farmers: "Be patient. If I took out a small loan, I would pay it back fully before starting anything new." She added that she just wants to be sustainable: "to make enough to live on, not rich but a living."

The Mendo Lake Food Hub has been a godsend, according to Engber. The Food Hub was organized by NCO and allows farmers like Engber to sell her produce online with local delivery through regional drop-off points. For example, Harvest Market on the coast can order her onions, cabbage or carrots online,

and she only needs to drop it off in Willits for a refrigerated delivery truck to pick up. The network is supported throughout Mendocino and Lake counties and has been successful in giving our local farmers an edge.

Little Lake Valley farmstead cheese maker Ana Cox of Shamrock Goat Cheese was another panelist. She joked that her 130-acre ranch is "being run by three senior citizens," since she, their manager and her husband are all over 70. That has become its own challenge, she said, as she used to do everything herself but now needs a hand, for example, when bucking hay. She wants to keep her farm small and manageable. Shamrock Goat Cheese wants to grow, but not too fast.

The other panelists shared insights like "Do what works well," from Coleen Seely of Seely's Farm. "I am not an onion person," Seely said, "but I can grow melons, okra, apples, tomatoes and summer squash like nobody's business." The Seelys had to close their farmstead in Lake County because buying trends have changed. Families don't take as many road trips, Seely said, and shop more in town now. She has also embraced selling through the Food Hub, as well as Lake County schools.

Melanie MacTavish is half of the team that makes up Nye Ranch in Fort Bragg. Her background is in flowers, so they have dedicated 50 percent of their 1-acre farm to growing beautiful blooms. Casey O'Neill of HappyDay Farms supplements his traditional crops with cannabis. He says he is happiest when he is farming, but that most of his time recently has been in meetings with the board of supervisors crafting policy for Mendocino County. Each of these farmers shared their

Read the rest of **Farmers** | Over on Page 6

Dunnicliff moves back to CEO's office

own unique styles, tips and strategies with the group.

Convergence attendees then gathered outside to rotate through small groups answering questions like: What is one thing that you are excited about this year? What is one inspiring project you have heard about at the convergence? The smiling faces of the attendees mingled and swapped ideas.

I overheard a peach farmer in Potter Valley, Langdon Day Farms, talk about reviving their family's historical orchard, and a produce manager at Ukiah Co-op who was searching for farms to work with. One gentleman, a rangeland specialist, was deep in conversation with Doug Mosel who grows wheat locally. Many connections were made, which is the point of this event.

A local feast was served for lunch courtesy of Ridgewood Ranch. Grange School of Adaptive Agriculture, and Black Dog Farm and Catering. The menu of squash and chicken curry with dal, rice pilaf and kale salad used produce from all over the county. Parducci Farm, Covelo Organics, Fortunate Farm, Strong Roots Farm, and Irene's Garden all pitched in vegetables. The dining room was abuzz with networking throughout lunch.

The afternoon was filled with breakout sessions such as "Composting Techniques," "Business Planning," "Saving Seed for Sale" and "Social Media Marketing." The exhibitor hall was busy all day. Attendees could talk with representatives of Mendocino County Farm Bureau, the Farmers Guild or the Local Food Guide. Keynote speaker Dina Izzo capped off the day with a talk about marketing your farm.

Organizers of the event closed the convergence with the first-ever Farmer/Buyer Mixer at the historic Howard House. Complementary local wine, beer and snacks were provided, while groups of farmers, grocery and restaurant buyers mingled, "speed dating" style. Lots of laughter filled the room as attendees wrapped up what was a very productive day.

The Farmers Convergence successfully connects area farmers and local food supporters alike. The goal of the convergence, according to NCO Farm to School Coordinator Terre Logsdon, is "to have everyone leave the event inspired and prepared for the upcoming growing season." Mission accomplished, NCO. Now if the sun will just keep shining, so the farmers can get outside and get busy!

Director of Planning and Building Services Steve Dunnicliff will be returning to his old job as the county's deputy chief executive officer, CEO Carmel J. Angelo has announced.

Dunnicliff will return to the Executive Office on April 3.

He began his county career in 2008, after working in the construction and real estate industries, and has "developed a successful track record as part of the county's leadership team, in his previous positions of economic development coordinator, deputy CEO, and Planning and Building director," Angelo said.

"Steve has done a tremendous job as director," she said, and "assembled a strong management team in the department. They are well positioned to build upon the foundation [he] established."

She described Dunnicliff as "an experienced administrator and an asset to the county, [and]

I believe his experience will be invaluable in addressing the many opportunities and challenges the county is facing."

Dunnicliff will begin managing the county's Facilities and Fleet divisions and working on several sustainable energy initiatives, among a variety of other tasks and assignments.

COLUMN | The Medicine Chest Garden

Tonic Herbal Teas for Spring

Currents in the great sea of blessings:

*The sun blesses the Earth with its warmth,
the clouds bless the land with rain,
the land blesses the seed with nourishment,
the plants bless the people and the animals with food.*

This month we welcome back spring, and to put a little more spring in your step, try making and drinking nourishing herbal infusions (teas). The tonic herbs are as close to food as they are to medicine, being high in plant proteins, minerals and vitamins. They work gently but deeply to support different body systems, especially when taken daily over a period of time.

Donna d'Terra

Columnist

Here are a few suggestions of tonic herbs to try:

Stinging Nettle Leaf (*Urtica dioica*) helps with energy levels by supporting your adrenals. (The nettle "sting" is eliminated when the herb is dried.)

Oatstraw, also called Milky Oats (*Avena fatua*), is the grass of the plant that gives us oatmeal. Herbally, it is considered to be "food for the nervous system": gentle, supportive help for people who are nervous or stressed.

Dunnicliff said he "is proud of the progress Planning & Building Services has made over the

last five years in implementing the board of supervisors' initiatives to enhance customer

service, streamline the permit process, and foster inter-departmental collaboration."

Among those accomplishments are the "QuickCheck" permit processing and creation of an online portal to allow the public to view permit processing activity, which will soon allow certain permits to be issued online (buildingmendocino.org).

"With the leadership of Planning and Building's management team of Mary Lynn Hunt, Adrienne Thompson, and Michael Lockett, I look forward to seeing the department's continued success and innovation," Dunnicliff said.

"I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to come back to the Executive Office and take on new challenges," he added. Angelo, he said, has developed a "strong leadership team, and I look forward to building upon the relationships I have with the board of supervisors, department heads, and community partners in my new role."

Submitted by the Mendocino County Executive Office

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*): the flower looks more pink than red. It contributes to bone health, helps normalize the thyroid, and has been traditionally used for generations as an anti-cancer herb. (Avoid this herb if you are taking blood-thinning medications.)

Linden (*Tilia playphyllos*) is a tree whose flowers are used to help reduce cholesterol and high blood pressure, to soothe tension and help promote restful sleep.

Here is how to make a daily habit of drinking these beneficial tonic teas. (They differ from a beverage tea of the same herbs by the greater amount of herb that is used and the consistency of drinking them daily over a period of several weeks.)

Put 1 ounce of dried herb of choice into a quart canning jar. If you have a favorite herb flavor such as mint (spearmint, peppermint), or lemon (lemon verbena, lemon balm, lemon grass), you can add a small handful of it also.

Pour in enough boiling water to completely fill the jar. Put the lid on tightly, and let it steep a minimum of 4 hours. (My habit is to make the infusion in the evening and let it steep overnight.) Then strain out the herbs, pour the tea back into the jar, and drink the tea throughout the day. You can drink it hot, at room temperature or cold, and add a little honey, if desired.

Sourcing high-quality herbs is an important consideration in making the most healthful teas. The most vital herbs will be ones that you grow or sustainably wild harvest yourself. Not everyone has the opportunity to do this. For buying herbs, in addition to our beloved Mariposa Market, these herbs can also be purchased online. I recommend Mountain Rose Herbs at mountainroseherbs.com, or 1-800-879-3337.

Celebrate the vernal equinox with a new habit of drinking a daily tonic tea. Salud!

[This information is not intended to diagnose, prescribe or replace the advice of a qualified health professional.]

An additional note: If you are interested in learning more about herbs, how to grow them, harvest them, make them into medicine, use them daily, etc., a new class is beginning in April. The "Everyday Herbs – Herbalism for Everyone" course will take place one Saturday per month from April through August at Motherland Botanical Sanctuary and Herb School, located 20 minutes northeast of Willits. To learn more, call 459-5030 or visit Motherlandherbs.org

Donna d'Terra is a lifelong student of the plants who teaches classes on local, sustainable, regenerative herbalism.

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Willits Weekly
The locals' community newspaper



Furry Friends Hoping for a Home

Sweet Stubby the Cat

Named for her shorter-than-average tail, Stubby is the sweetest thing on four paws! This petite girl is 7 months old and can't get enough of human love and attention. Stubby plays well with other cats, and just wants to curl up on your lap and purr herself to sleep.

For more information on Stubby or other adoptable animals, call 707-485-0123, check www.mendohumanesociety.com, or visit the shelter at 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley. Open hours: 1 to 5 pm, Wednesday through Friday; and 11 am to 3 pm, Saturday and Sunday.

HOME CENTER & LUMBER CO.
MENDO MILL

THIS SATURDAY
10am - 11:30am

Mendo Mill in Willits is proud to host a community veterinary clinic with

vip.petcare

Vaccinations, testing & deworming, RX heartworm, and flea & tick control for your cat and dog. Visit Mendo Mill for prices.
Licensed Veterinarian at every clinic • No appointment necessary

305 E. COMMERCIAL STREET

Cheerful Chocolate the Pup

Chocolate is a 3-month-old neutered male, mixed-breed dog who will grow to be a medium-sized adult dog. As all puppies, he is happy, playful and adorable when interacting with our big, fluffy tester dog, Oliver. Puppies are wonderful, and watching them grow is awesome and rewarding. But! Puppies also take a lot of work. Please be sure you and your family have the time and patience for a puppy! You can also come in and meet Chocolate's mom, Cookie, who is here at the shelter waiting for her new family to find her.

The Ukiah Animal Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, and adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4:30 pm, and Wednesday from 10 am to 6:30 pm. Many wonderful dogs and cats await their forever homes here. To view photos and bios, please visit online at: www.mendoanimalshelter.com. More info about adoptions: 707-467-6453.



Photo by Rod Coots

MENDOCINO COUNTY ANIMAL CARE SERVICES

In anticipation of kitten season, the Ukiah Shelter will be holding a **DROP-IN**

Cat Spay & Neuter Day

Tuesday, March 21

- No appointment necessary
- low income, stray and feral cats
- 3 cats per person
- 1 cat per carrier or trap
- Cats must be older than 2 months
- no food after midnight the night prior (ferals excluded, may need to use food to bait traps)
- Drop off at the side entrance of the shelter between 7-9 am
- Pick up between 3-5 pm

AVAR & SNAP will be helping to fund cat sterilizations and vaccinations of low income, stray and feral cats. We will have Veterinarians in the shelter clinic, as well as in the county Care-a-Van working to help keep down our cat population!

MENDOCINO ANIMAL CARE SERVICES
UKIAH SHELTER
298 Plant Road ■ 707-463-4427
www.mendoanimalshelter.com

A big thank you to all who helped us raise \$37,214 in our

2016 WINTER FUND DRIVE

FRIENDS \$0 - \$49 James and Leigh Austin Frank & Erla Barr David & Linda Beebe Bonita Belt & Steven Drake John Bothwell & Patricia Wilson Tommie & Louise Brown Brown Martin & Laura Clein Jack & Alice Cunningham Peter Dal Poggetto Dancing Madrone Soap Co. Nicholas & Mary Durnpt James & Nancy Eaglin Esther Faber Helen Falandes & Clancy Rash Joanne Franklin Peter & Deborah Greig Karen Gridley & Wolfgang Ronnefeldt Betty Hansen Robert & Jeri Harman Patricia & John Bonnoitt IN MEMORY of ED & ELVIS MILLS Bob Chevalier IN MEMORY OF LILLIAN CHEVALIER Cynthia & John Jeavons Dave Knudsen Ronda Landes Ken Larue & Carol Grice Roz & Rick Lina Gary & Margaret Magratten Sylvia Manor Laura & Dan McBride Sherry & Larry Minson Douglas & Kay Nord Mary Pappadakis Lee & Evelyn Persico Suzanne Picetti Umakant & Surman Mistry Pine Cone Motel - Om Shiva Roxanne Ready Alleen Recio Hollis Rose Leonor Saijo Shiloh Gateway of Worship Susan Short & Bill White Sheryl Smith Sandra & Thomas Strong	Clarence & Priscilla Tarver Eloise Toomey Marilyn Townsend Nan Trichler April Tweddell John & Debi Vau Jack & Joan Wade Doris Wier Theodore & Carolyn Wilcox Dean & Beverly Wise SUPPORTERS \$50 - \$249 Walter Abramson Tamara Adams John Almida Karl Amo Rosalie & Henry Anchorodoguy/Shebitz Dr. Bruce & Cassandra Andich Herbert & Judith Armstrong Robert & Margrete Arnold Bill Barksdale Rose Bird Nancy Boone William & Florence Bowler Delores Braden Eric & Josephine Bradley John Bredehoft Patsy Broeske Melinda Clarke Pat Collins Sharon Collins Linda & Bob Comings-McDonald Jesse Cougar Thayer and Paul Craig John Cross & Diana Cavendish Rosamond Crowder & Doug Prado Larry & Marisella Desmond Dripworks Dean & Geraldine Durbin Sherrie Ebyam Catherine Edison Amy Elliott Robert and Patricia Falge Scott & Judy Ferleman John & Gerry Figg-Hoblyn Frank R. Howard Foundation Bret & Kristin Fraser	Michael Frey Friends of Willits Farmers Market Robert Fry Allen and Marna Garcia Cathy Glyer John & Doreen Glyer Robin Goldner, LCSW Bill & Emmy Good Pauline Grzanich Bruce Haanstra & Carol Aleshire Marge Handley Henry Hanson Pat & Elizabeth Hart Vivian Haselswerdt Andrew Hill & Pauline Harper John & Lena Hofmaister Karen Holden Kathleen Hopper David & Geri Hulse-Stephens Richard Jeske Lynn Dee Johnson Gerald & Cheryl Jordan Lowell & Wilma Justus Greg & Mary Kanne Agnes Marie Karlin Kingsley Augusta Chapter #58 Order of the Eastern Star of CA Steve Hill & Cypress Kovner James Kramer L.Cid Construction Donald & Janet Lamprich Geraldine Lassner & Kathie Havice MaryLou Leonard & Andrew Stein Monte & Kathleen Lieberfarb LNS Welding & Fabrication Daniel Loughry Gary & Diana Mann Lynne & Keith Matheny Denise & Robert Mattos Laura & Michael McAlister Debbie McCubbin Louis & Janice Meier Microphor Don & Mary Louise Morris Laurel Morris Sara O'Brien	Olga & Noel O'Neill 101 Trailer & R.V. Market Opal Miner Insurance Agency Tony & Janet Orth Carol Orton Richard Paduia Charlie Palmer Lucy Perkins Arpad & Cindy Peter Kris & Rick Pierce Ponderosa & Sun Realty R. Horse Ranch Peggy Randrup Marcia Rautenstrauch Robbin & Tamia Rempel Phillip & Elizabeth Reidel Karen & Richard Rizzolo Dennis & Katharine Rohrs Ron's Muffler & Automotive Al & Beth Rosen Sally Rulison & Keith Monroe Keith Rutledge & Nancy Simpson J. Rebecca Sandridge Tom & Shirley Schott Dennis & Rowayne Schrage Ron Sheets Pamela & Robert Shilling Larry & Kathleen Shipley Stephen & Sharon Short Phillip & Kathy Shuster Diane Smalley & Wallace Stahle Linda Sobolewski St. Anthony Church Guild Allegra Steele Gene & Carley Stewart Margaret Strong Scott Terry & Kacy Knudsen Clifford & Marcia Tichenor Donna Vaiano Tom Walz Ed & Starla Warburton Dobbe Wattenberg & Don Willis Dave & Jenny Watts Brian Weller & Freddie Long Theresa & Jeffery Whitby Barbara Willens Willits Mini-Storage	Willits Weekly Diane Woertink Ruth Alice Young Patricia & Bruce Yoxall Mary Zellachild Mary Ziady & Richard Christopher
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FRANK R. HOWARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL INVITES YOU TO

A Community Open House to

Meet & Greet Jason Wells, President & CEO

Please join us
in giving a warm Willits welcome to Jason Wells, our new president and CEO.

This event is free and open to everyone and is an opportunity for the community to learn more about Jason and the hospital.

Thursday, March 30
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Free and Open to the Community

Main Lobby of the New Hospital
1 Marcela Drive in Willits
(Corner of East Hill and Haehl Creek Drive)

Appetizers & refreshments will be served



Jason Wells comes to us from Asheville, North Carolina, where he provided physician oversight for Park Ridge Health, a 103-bed community hospital. Under Jason's leadership at Park Ridge, the number of physicians nearly doubled in size. He was also instrumental in launching new services, leading the integration of their primary care group and tremendously improving the patient experience and employee engagement.

In his free time, Jason enjoys spending time with his wife and their three children (11, 8 and 5). They are looking forward to camping in the redwoods, enjoying the beach and spending time together exploring the beautiful Mendocino county area.

Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital

Will be known as: **Adventist Health**
Frank R. Howard Memorial

Thursday, March 16

Sonoma Clean Power: Sonoma Clean Power, the new default electricity provider for Mendocino County, hosts a public meeting for Willits residents to learn more about their services and customer options. SCP will start providing local services in June 2017. Thursday, March 16, 10 to 11 am. Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Sonoma Clean Power will also have a table at this week's Willits Farmers Market, see market listing below for details. Info: Danielle Baker, 978-3465.

Willits Winter Farmers Market: every Thursday afternoon from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Veggies, local meats and local grains, honey, dinner, savory and sweet baked goods, gift items, jams and jellies, artisan and fair trade chocolates, crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

Matinee Movie at the Library: "Hunger Games," a teen mutual slaughter flick, will show Thursday, March 16, 4 to 6 pm. Free. Willits Public Library, 390 East Commercial Street.

Now and Then Film Series at the Grange: "King of Hearts," the 1966, brilliant Alan Bates anti-war film; when the inmates of an asylum take over a small French town while the Great War ravages the countryside. Goodies available: heirloom organic popcorn, fair trade chocolate. Thursday, March 16. Trailers and short films at 6:30, feature starts at 7 pm. \$5 donation. Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street.

Hot Topics in Diabetes: Howard Hospital's Clinical Nutrition Manager Annie Frassinello will speak on the topic, "Sugar Addiction and How to Conquer It." Thursday, March 16, 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Seabiscuit Conference Room, Howard Memorial Hospital, 1 Marcela Drive. RSVP: Dietitian's Office: 456-3132.

Planning Walk for Wellness: Help plan the next Walk for Wellness which will take place May 13. Come to the home of Martin and Saprina Rodriguez, 265 West Mendocino Street, on Thursday, March 16 at 6:30 pm. Please call Martin at 456-9800 to let them know you plan to attend.

Friday, March 17
Green Glitter Day: It's Saint Patrick's Day and for that extra touch of holiday glitz, come get temporary tattoos or your beards, mustaches, lips, eyes, nails, and even your hair accented with gorgeous green glitters. No charge! Friday, March 17, 8 am to 5 pm. Glitter My World & Glitter University, 132 East Valley Road.



What's Happening Around Town

Willits High School JV Baseball: Willits vs. Sonoma Academy. Friday, March 17, 3:30 pm. Southside Baseball Field, East Commercial Street. (Coach Darren Wisdom).

Willits High School Varsity Baseball: Willits vs. Sonoma Academy. Friday, March 17, 4 pm. Willits High School Baseball Field, 299 North Main Street. (Coach Rick Yador).

Willits High School Varsity Softball: Willits vs. Geyserville. Friday, March 17, 4 pm. Willits High School Softball Field, 299 North Main Street. (Coach Magnum Forkner).

Shanachie Pub: St. Patty's Day Party with Funkacillin. Five Mendocino County musicians and one Bay Area percussionist will be "puttin' the stank on it." Cherie Sheraque, vocals; Lex Kraus, guitar; Jim Dooley, trumpet and keyboard; Steven Serbins, drums; Jake Keller, bass; Phil Montalvo, percussion. "The one thing that can solve most of our problems is dancing." And "Funkacillin aims to put your troubles on the back burner with a mix that will have you flashin' back to the days of paisley prints and platform shoes, and get your booty shakin'!" Friday, March 17, 9 pm. \$5 cover. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, March 18

Eel River Field Trip: Join with the Eel River Recovery Project (ERRP) at the Willits Hub for a field trip to the upper Eel River, Soda Creek and Lake Pillsbury via Upper Lake. Bring a bag lunch and something to drink. May rain, bring rain gear. Regarding transportation: "We'll caravan and a 12-passenger van is available for those without vehicles. We will work it out when we all get here." Saturday, March 18. The aim is to leave at 9 am from the Willits Hub (formerly the Willits Environmental Center), 630 South Main Street. Info: 459-0155.

Ancestry Day at the Willits Library: A day of fun for the whole family! Saturday, March 18, 1 to 3 pm at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Free. "Creating simple family trees for the young ones, and research tips and tricks for the older generation. Bring your laptop if you have one." Info: 459-5908.

Big Book-Room Bash: Friends of the Long Valley Library presents

am and continue throughout the day. Willits Hub (formerly the Willits Environmental Center), 630 South Main Street. Info: 459-0155, or eelriverrecovery.org.

Standing Rock Strategies Meeting: The House Elder of the Mendocino Standing Rock Safe House, a place of refuge for Standing Rock Water Protectors, will speak on the topic: "Still Standing Rock! What's next?" Admission is free. Family-friendly. Light refreshments will be served. Donations will go to support the Safe House as long as it is needed and the Water Protectors' Legal Fund. All donations will be matched up to \$1,000 by Mendo Blue. Sunday, March 19, Noon to 3 pm. Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Info: Janey Mitchell 354-0423; 707-867-1717; or h2olv95454@gmail.com.

Town Hall Meeting: "Immigration Policy in Willits & the 95490 area." A moderated discussion, with questions and answers about immigration. Panelists include Heather Gurewitz (immigration specialist for Congressman Jared Huffman), Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman, Willits Mayor Gerry Gonzalez, and Willits City Council Member Saprina Rodriguez. Answers to questions about immigration submitted to District Attorney David Eyster will be read (the DA was unable to attend). "Everyone interested in how our community responds to immigration-related issues is welcome to attend. We believe a community that talks together about issues that affect us all is a stronger, more resilient community." Sunday, March 19, 3:30 to 6 pm. Willits City Hall, 111 East Commercial Street. Info: Jane McCabe 456-9067, Jim Marill 707-513-9981.

Duane Brown Memorial Dinner: The American Legion Willits Post #174 presents the annual St. Patrick's Day "Duane Brown Memorial Dinner, on Saturday, March 18, from 5 to 7 pm. Veterans Memorial Building, 191 North Main Street. Featuring Corned Beef & Cabbage, Murphy's Spuds, Carrots, Onions, etc. and Dessert. Tickets may be purchased at the door: \$18 for adults; \$9 kids under 12; kids under 5 are free.

Shanachie Pub: Los Troubadoux is a group of the world, with accordion, percussion, bass, and guitar. It plays traditional and original songs in French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Creole and English, in the styles of Samba, Forro, Kompa, Canimbo, Son-Cubano. Saturday, March 18, 9 pm. No cover. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street. Info: 459-9194.

Eco Talk at the Willits Hub: The Eel River Recovery Project (ERRP) is sponsoring a day of Eel River Watershed talks and presentations. The Willits Hub doors open at 9:30 am for coffee, bagels and fresh fruit; presentations begin at 10

Monday, March 20
Dances at the Grange: Willits Dances of Universal Peace: "Come join us as we celebrate the unity of the world's wisdom traditions." Sacred circle movement & chanting. Monday, March 20, 7 to 9 pm. Room 4, Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Info: 459-9085.

Tuesday, March 21
Mandala Stones at Willits Library: Join us for a night of creativity. Choose a rock and color palette and create a work of art. Tuesday, March 21, 5:30 to 6:30 pm. Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street.

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are

Wednesday, March 22
WCA Docent Training: Willits Center for the Arts needs volunteer docents! A 2-hour docent training (no charge) is being offered on Sunday, March 26 at the WCA, 71 East Commercial Street, from 1 to 3 pm. Docents are sought to "sit the gallery" once or twice a month, covering 11 am to 2 pm or 2 pm to 5 pm shifts. Weekend spots are especially needed. "Sitting the gallery involves opening up the gallery, welcoming visitors, answering questions about the artwork if needed, and making sales. The training includes information about the history of WCA and a bit about art in general. Docents are welcome to read, make art, listen to music or browse the internet on the WCA Wi-Fi connection while at the gallery." Those interested in volunteering as docents, but who can't make this scheduled training, can contact gallery manager Holly Madrigal at 459-1726 or WCARental@gmail.com.

Friday, March 24
Shanachie Pub: Forest, Sarah Rose and Special Guests. Musical buddies Sarah Rose McMahon and Forrest Glycer plus several friends play "heartfelt original and familiar songs ... their unique brand of folk Americana." Friday, March 24, 8 pm. No cover. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, March 25
Shanachie Pub: Sandy Poze & Bob Hermann from the Bay Area play an acoustic mix of Americana, Folk, Blues, Country, and Swing. Saturday, March 25, 8 pm. \$5 cover. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street. Info: 459-9194.

Sunday, March 26
Little Lake Grange Pancake Breakfast: 8 to 11 am, Sunday, March 26. "Join your friends at the Grange breakfast! \$8 buys you a plate of the best 'scratch' pancakes & local farm eggs to be found anywhere around. Our tasty breakfast is a wonderful combination of comfort foods..." Choose sourdough wholegrain, Hank's Famous Buttermilk Pancakes or gluten-free, Beeler's Quality Bacon, organic eggs, real butter, juice, organic coffee or tea. \$8; \$7 seniors, \$5 children under 10. Extra: sides of organic fruit and Amish organic maple syrup. Little Lake Grange #670, 291 School Street (2 blocks south of Commercial, 1 block west of 101). Info: 459-9716.

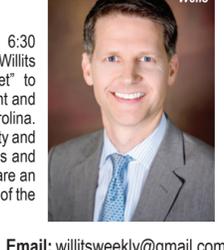
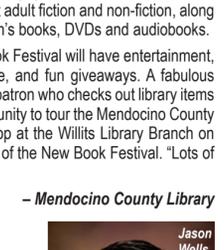
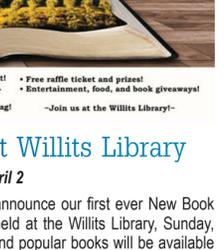
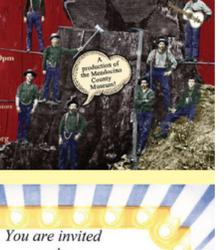
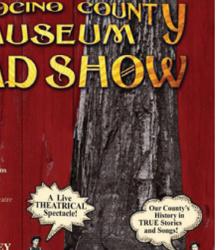
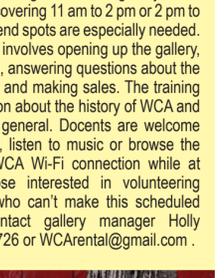
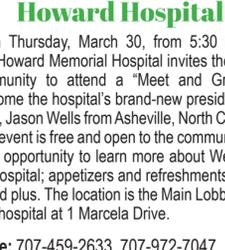
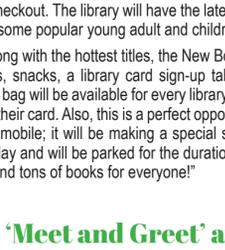
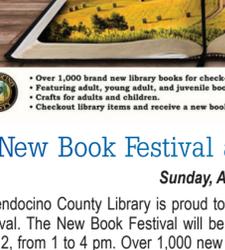
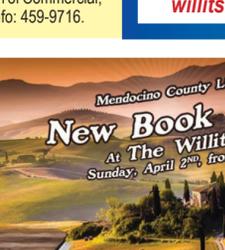
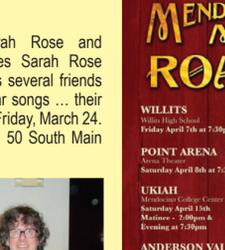
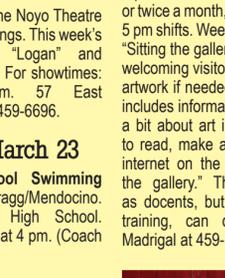
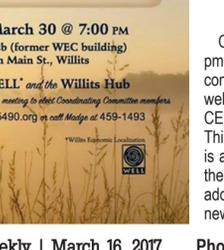
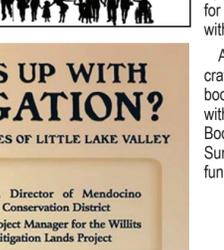
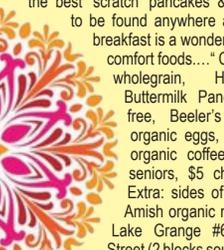
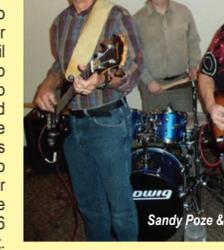
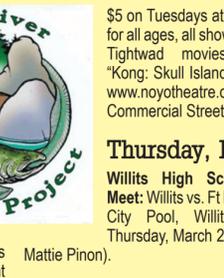
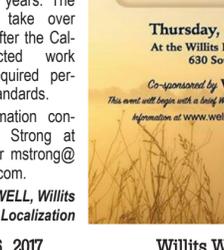
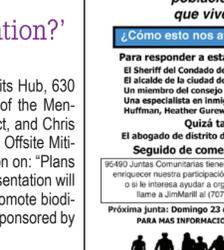
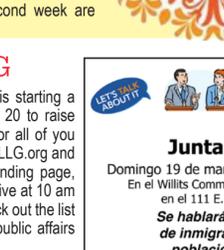
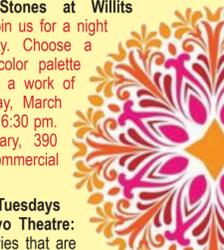
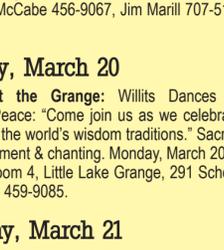
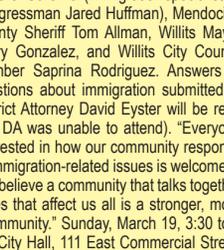
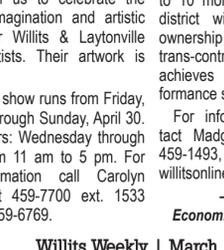
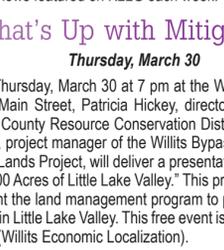
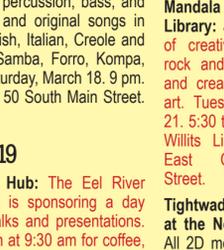
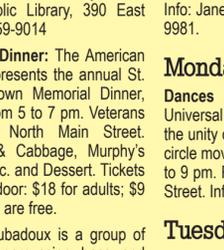
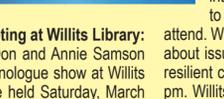
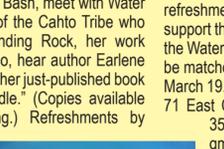
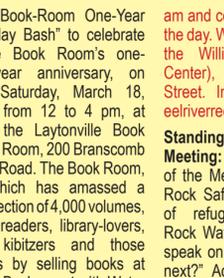
Monday, March 27
Jointa Comunitaria
Domingo 19 de marzo de 2017 De 3:30 a 6:00pm
En el Willits Community Center/City Hall Localizado en el 111 E. Commercial St., en Willits
Se hablará acerca de las polices de inmigración que afectan a la población de Willits y gente que vive a sus alrededores
¿Cómo esto nos afecta? ¿Qué podemos hacer?
Para responder a estas preguntas, estarán con nosotros:
El Sheriff del Condado de Mendocino, Tom Allman
El alcalde de la ciudad de Willits, Gerry Gonzalez
Un miembro del consejo de la ciudad de Willits, Saprina Rodriguez
Una especialista en inmigración, de la oficina del congresista Jared Huffman, Heather Gurewitz
Quizá también nos acompañe:
El abogado de distrito del Condado de Mendocino, David Eyster
Seguido de comentarios o preguntas del público
95490 Junta Comunitaria tienen el objetivo de reunir las voces de la comunidad para analizar nuestra participación en el proceso democrático. Para más información o si le interesa ayudar a organizar, planificar o participar en eventos futuros, llame a Jim Marill al (707) 513-9981 o Jane McCabe al (707) 540-3802
Próxima Junta: Domingo 23 de abril de 2017, en el salón Little Lake Grange
PARA MAS INFORMACION Llame al: 707.513.9981 o al 707.540.3802

Senior Center Lunch
March 20 through March 24
Monday: Beef Tips/Noodles
Tuesday: Chicken Cacciatore
Wednesday: Meat Loaf
Thursday: Polish Sausage w/ Steamed Cabbage
Friday: Chicken Fried Steak
Harrah Senior Center serves lunch five days per week from 11:45 am to 1 pm. 55 and older: \$5.50 per meal; under 55: \$7 per meal. Includes soup, entree, vegetable, bread, dessert, and drink. 1501 Baechtel Road. Info: 459-6826.

Art Under 20 at WCT
The 18th annual Art Under 20 show will open on Friday, March 31. The opening night reception for the artists will be held from 4 to 7 pm at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street.
Art Under 20 is presented by the Willits High School Visual Arts Department. Artists from Willits Charter School, San Hedrin High School, Laytonville High School and La Vida Charter School have been invited to participate. Approximately 125 young-adult artists will be presenting their artworks to the community. For some of them it will be their gallery debut.
"This year's show will be a wonderful experience for the artists who are exhibiting their work!" Art Under 20 has become one of the most popular shows at the Willits Center for the Arts. Last year's show was visited by over 1,000 people. "Please join us to celebrate the creativity, imagination and artistic gifts of our Willits & Laytonville teenage artists. Their artwork is impressive!"
The 2017 show runs from Friday, March 31 through Sunday, April 30. Gallery hours: Wednesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm. For more information call Carolyn Bakewell at 459-7700 ext. 1533 (WHS), or 459-6769.

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Ongoing Events

Willits Winter Farmers Market: every Thursday afternoon from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Veggies, local meats and local grains, honey, dinner, savory and sweet baked goods, gift items, jams and jellies, artisan and fair trade chocolates, crafts, live music - the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

Bi-Monthly Parkinson's Information and Support Meeting: Join Linda Posner and guests every 2nd and 4th Monday, 10:30 to 11:30 am. Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Info: 459-1941.

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.

Tuesday Night Potluck Bingo: Potluck dinner and bingo every Tuesday at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. "Be sure to bring a dish to share!" 5 to 7 pm; \$5 buy-in; 50 cents per card. Info: 459-6826.

The Willits Seed Lending Library: Offering information on seed saving and gardening. Seeds of flowers, herbs, and vegetables are free to seed library members, and seed donations are gladly accepted. "We look forward to seeing you at the Willits Library!"

Al-Anon Meeting: Thursday nights from 5:30 to 6:30 pm, at the Baechtel Creek Village Community Room (behind Rite-Aid) at the Evergreen Shopping Center. Saturdays at 10 am at St. Francis Episcopal Church Fellowship Hall, 66 East Commercial Street. "Al-Anon Family groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience strength and hope to solve their common problems. We believe that alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery."

Willits Library Activities: Tuesdays: 3 to 5 pm, "Wii Day" (video games); Wednesdays: (except the first Wednesday of the month), 9 to 10 am, "Tracing Your Past" (research your family tree, must pre-register) and 3:30 to 4:30 pm, "Lego Day" (bring your imagination and start building); Thursdays: 11 to 11:30 am, "Walkers and Crawlers" (stories, songs and a craft with the children's librarian); Fridays: 3:30 to 4:30 pm, "Therapeutic Coloring Club" (get creative as you unwind); Fridays: 5 to 7 pm, "Youth Game Night" (Magic the Gathering, Force of Will, Pokemon, board games, puzzles, chess and more, geared for ages 10 to 14); Saturdays: 1 to 2:30 pm, "The Crafty Librarian" (fun crafts for the whole family). Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: Wendy Copperfield 459-5908.

Drop-in Knitting Circle: every Saturday of the month, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm at the Willits Branch Library, 390 East Commercial Street. "Bring your own projects or your yarn and needles; we have people who should be able to help solve problems and/or help you learn to knit or crochet. Sign-ups are not necessary - everyone is welcome to drop in." Info: Lotus Baker at 456-9037, or lotusb3@earthlink.net.

Soroptimists International of Willits: Women's service club aimed at the betterment of girls and women. Meets second and third Tuesdays of every month, noon to 1 pm, at Old Mission Pizza, 1708 South Main Street, in the back room. Women interested in community service are welcome; new members are encouraged to join at any time.

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

Volleyball Open Gym: at Baechtel Grove gym; Sundays 7:30 pm and Tuesdays at 8:30 pm. Some experience desired, but not required. \$5 per night; first night free. Info: Jeff at 354-1850.

Smoking Cessation Program: Free "Freedom from Smoking" class sponsored by the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital. Every Wednesday at the HMH 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 6:30 pm; Karate: Thursday, Little Dragons-ages 3 to 6, 5 pm to 6 pm; Youth Karate-ages 6 to 11, 6 pm to 7 pm; Tweens to Adults-ages 11 and up, 7 pm to 8:30 pm. All SAL programs free to the public. Info: www.facebook.com/MendocinoCountySheriffsYouthActivitiesLeague or Mike Tobin: 354-0565.

Shanachie Pub: Singer songwriter Aaron Ford every first Thursday, 8 pm. No cover. Jazz Night every second and fourth Thursday, 8 pm. No cover. "Local musicians ... take jazz standards and infuse them with funk, hip hop, world, and free form jamming. The outcome is unexplainable." Open Mic Night every Wednesday, 8 pm. Sign-ups start at 7:30 pm; pre-signup list starts at 3 pm when the Pub opens. "An eclectic array of local musicians and even performers from around the world!" 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194

Laytonville Winter Farmers Market: Mondays, November through May, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm at Harwood Hall, 44400 Willits Avenue, Laytonville. Local fresh fruits and vegetables, artisan goat cheeses, ranch meats, eggs, handcrafted clothing, live music and much more.



Gala Night

Student talent is showcased at annual WECS fundraiser

The 5th Annual Willits Elementary Charter School Gala treated more than 140 guests on a cold and rainy night to dinner and entertainment to help raise funds for the school. More than \$10,000 was raised at the March 4 event at the Little Lake Grange, through dinner sales, a silent auction and the \$800 dessert auction, called by Billy Hetherington. The money will be used to improve the school grounds, add more play equipment, and create an outdoor classroom and an arbor project.

The event was emceed by Tyler Ballthrop, music teacher at the school. The ambitious acts included traditional dance and audience "hand dance" participation by the Dance Club, headed by Megan Wolff; a rousing rendition of "The Best Day of My Life," by the kindergartens, first and second grade students; Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," played on recorders by third graders; Pharrell Williams' "Happy" played on ukuleles by fourth grade students, and The Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun" performed by the fifth grade on guitars.

— Mathew Caine



SPARETIME SUPPLY

SPRING HOURS:
MONDAY – FRIDAY – 8AM – 7PM
SATURDAY – 9AM – 7PM SUNDAY – 9AM – 5PM

208 EAST SAN FRANCISCO AVE, WILLITS, CA 95490
PHONE: 707-459-6791 WWW.SPARETIMESUPPLY.COM

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At far left: Fifth-graders perform "Here Comes the Sun," with music teacher Tyler Ballthrop. At left: Fourth-graders play "Happy" on ukuleles. Below, from left: Student performers from Mr. N's first-grade class, Miss Felton's second-grade class, and Mr. Madden's third-grade class. First-grade teacher Mr. N, dressed up for the gala occasion. Megan Wolff and her students teach the audience how to "hand dance."

Photos by Mathew Caine



At top: Dance Club students take a bow. Above: Third-grade students, with teacher Mr. Madden, play Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" on recorders. At right: Phoenix and Sheridan Wood help serve dinner.

At far left: Students wait their turn to perform. At left: Charter school students Farrow Lockwood and Sheridan Wood help serve dinner. Below: Third-grade students play Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" on recorders. At right: Phoenix and Ember Hetherington can't wait to dig into the owl cake their grandad Bill Schwartz bought in the dessert auction.



The rest of Hub | From Page 1

The three groups also have combined to offer an array of activities from March 18 through April 15, the period during which the crowd-funding campaign is happening. On Saturday, March 18, ERRP will sponsor a field trip to the Upper Eel River area, from Lake Pillsbury to Van Arsdale Dam. Meet at the Hub at 9 am, and expect to be out and about until 5 pm.

The next day, Sunday, March 19, ERRP will host a "Fish and Aquatic Life Day," a series of talks on the ecology of the Eel River. The daylong event takes place at the Hub and begins at 10 am.

On Saturday, March 25, WELL will open the doors at the Hub at noon for a planning session to draft a local action plan. Bring your own lunch; the event lasts for approximately one hour.

On Thursday, March 30, WELL will host a talk on the Willits bypass mitigation program from 7 to 9 pm. Presenters will include Patricia Hickey, director of the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, and Chris Bartow, project manager for the Willits Bypass Offsite Mitigation Lands Project.

On Saturday, April 1, the Hub will host a talk and workshop from 10 am to 5 pm on protecting and expanding the Eel River Wilderness. The following Saturday, April 8, there will be a talk on "Forest Health in the Eel River Watershed" at 10 am.

On Saturday, April 15, the crowd-funding campaign ends. The Hub will offer a workshop that day, 10 am to 5 pm, on "Best Practices for Growing Cannabis," and will celebrate the end of the crowd-funding campaign with a dinner.

Concerning the campaign, local journalist and Ukiah resident Will Parrish recently released a letter claiming The Willits News got it wrong in a story published earlier this month. The story reported Parrish had loaned the Hub \$12,000, and that the crowd-funding campaign was intended to raise funds to pay Parrish back.

"A 'correction' in the following edition claimed I had once offered to donate said sum, but then retracted the offer. I would be delighted if either of [those claims] were accurate, since either would probably mean I have much more wealth at my disposal than I do in reality. Alas, I make a very modest living as a freelance journalist and have trouble enough paying my own rent," Parrish wrote. "It is true, however, that I am helping raise attention about the Willits Hub fundraising campaign and encouraging others to donate," he added.

The rest of Nabbed | From Page 1

marijuana in Laytonville for about 10 years, family members told the Santa Rosa Press Democrat.

New Jersey State Police arrested Blank at about 9 pm last Friday after they developed information he was at the home. He was booked into Mercer County Jail on a no-bail murder warrant.

Mendocino County authorities are seeking Blank's extradition for prosecution here.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office believes most of the suspects had worked on Settler's pot farm as marijuana trimmers and fled the crime scene with more than 100 pounds of pot, none of which was recovered.

The other six suspects – Jesse Cole Wells, 33; Frederick Gaestel, 27, of Clifton, New Jersey; Michael Andrew Kane, 24, of Pleasantville, New York; Abdurahman Mohamed, 28, of San Diego; Zachary Ryan Wuester, 24, of Haskell, New Jersey; and Gary Lynn Fitzgerald, 23, of Roanoke, Illinois – appeared in Mendocino County Superior Court on March 3 to enter pleas in the case. Judge Richard Henderson, filling in for Judge John A. Behnke, continued that hearing until April 24, said Mike Geniella, public information officer for the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office.

Sheriff's detectives have been working "full time on the case" since Settler's beaten, stabbed body was discovered in a shed on his rural north county pot farm.

The nationwide manhunt for the suspects involved numerous California and out-of-state law enforcement agencies and was very expensive, Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman told Willits Weekly.

"Including examining the crime scene, investigations, travel, overtime and other expenses, I'd estimate the cost at about \$200,000," Allman said.

In late February and early March, sheriff's detectives were in communication with numerous state, local and federal law enforcement agencies in multiple states to try and locate Blank, said detective Sgt. Andrew Porter.

"This included agencies in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey" after information from anonymous sources indicated Blank "had been provided a ride from Southern California to the northeast," Porter said.

New Jersey State Police detectives notified the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office they had discovered where Blank was staying just after 9 pm on March 10, and

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WW106
Fictitious Business Name Statement
2017-F0061

The following person is doing business as: **Suite 75, 750 S. Main St., Willits CA 95490.** This business is conducted by an individual: **Christina Bowers, 370 Laurel St., Willits CA 95490.**

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: **N/A.**

Statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk on January 25, 2017.

s/Christina N. Bowers
Pub dates 02/23, 03/02, 03/09, 03/16/2017

WW108
Fictitious Business Name Statement
2017-F0221

The following person is doing business as: **Butternut Squash / Gucis Grizzlies, 2471 Bear Place, Willits CA 95490.** This business is conducted by an individual: **Jordan Scott, 2471 Bear Place, Willits CA 95490.**

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: **N/A.**

Statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk on March 9, 2017.

s/Jordan Scott
Pub dates 03/16, 03/23, 03/30 and 04/06/2017

WW110
NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF

Elizabeth Ferguson, aka Elizabeth Delores Ferguson
CASE NO. SCUK-CVPB-17-26791

Notice is hereby given to the creditors and contingent creditors of the above-named decedent, that all persons having claims against the decedent are required to file them with the Superior Court of the County of Mendocino, at 100 North State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482 and/or deliver a copy to Patricia Gene Bandenbrook and Bette Jo Miller, as Co-Trustees of the Elizabeth Ferguson 2009 Revocable Trust, dated April 28, 2009, wherein the decedent was the settlor, c/o Jennifer M. O'Brien, Esq., Neary and O'Brien, 110 South Main Street, Suite C, Willits CA 95490, within the later of four months after March 16, 2017 or, if notice is mailed or personally delivered to you, 60 days after the date this notice is mailed or personally delivered to you, or you must petition to file a late claim as provided in Section 19103 of the Probate Code. A claim form may be obtained from the court clerk. For your protection, you are encouraged to file your claim by certified mail, with return receipt requested.

Dated: January 31, 2017

Signed: Jennifer M. O'Brien, Neary and O'Brien, 110 South Main Street, Suite C, Willits CA 95490

Pub dates: 03/16, 03/23, 03/30/2017

WW109
NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: Christopher Peter LoPinto

CASE NO. SCUK-CVPB-17-26797

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of: Christopher Peter LoPinto, Christopher P. LoPinto.

1. A **Petition for Probate** has been filed by Brad Walton in the Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino.

2. The **Petition for Probate** requests that Brad Walton be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

3. The **Petition for Probate** requests that Brad Walton be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

4. The **Petition** requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

5. The **Petition** requests authority to administer the estate under the independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

6. A **hearing on the petition** will be held in this court as follows: Date: April 7, 2017 Time: 9 AM Dept.: E Address of court: Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino, 100 North State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482. Branch Name: Ukiah

7. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

8. If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) **four months** from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) **60 days** from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

9. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

10. Attorney for Petitioner, Jennifer M. O'Brien: 110 South Main Street, Suite C, Willits CA 95490; 707-459-5551.

Pub dates: 03/16, 03/23, 03/30/2017

arrested him without incident minutes later.

The Sheriff's Office is working with the District Attorney's Office and the State of New Jersey extradite Blank to Mendocino County for prosecution.

"The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office would like to extend its appreciation to the New Jersey State Police and the Toledo Ohio Police Department for their assistance on this case," Allman said.

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Community HU Song
In our fast-paced world, are you looking to find more inner peace? Join us for a Community HU Song: **New Day!** Wednesday, March 22, at 6 pm at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. HU (pronounced hue) is a simple, uplifting prayer or mantra that can help you experience divine love and an inner calm. All faiths are welcome. Sponsored by Eckankar: Ancient Wisdom for Today. Information? Please call 972-2475 or visit miraclesinyourlife.org.

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Volunteer Opportunities
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For a complete list of current job openings and to apply:
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From left: Jenn Drew, president of the Willits Educational Foundation, came to the WEF dinner still dressed up for "Wacky Tacky" Day at Blosser Lane Elementary School. Taylor Drew stirs the big bean pot. Cookie bagger extraordinaire Angi Edgar holds bags of homemade cookies. Colleen Zak, left and Rebecca Smith work the Emandal bread station. Below: Sydney Kubin, Maci Yokum and Haley Kvasnicka enjoyed handing out brown bags full of dinner for four to the drive-thru diners. Photos by Jennifer Poole

WEF Drive-Thru Tri Tip Dinner sells out

The crew at the sold-out Willits Educational Foundation Drive-Thru Tri Tip Dinner was busy on March 4, organizing and serving their delicious meal to happy ticket-holders.

Jennifer Poole, Editor & Reporter, jennif@willitsweekly.com, reported that Cowboy Willy, the "Big Man" statue at the Willits Frontier Days Rodeo Grounds, welcomed drivers as they turned in to pick up their meal. The big brown "to go" bags were filled with a whole tri tip, Caesar salad, Goss family beans, Emandal bread, homemade cookies and a rose from Flowers by Annette.

Volunteers arrived at the Rodeo Grounds early Friday morning to get the wood fires going for the big bean pot and to barbecue 210 whole tri tips. By the time customers showed up, the BBQ crew was enjoying some well-earned rest and relaxation.

Proceeds from the annual WEF dinner go to fund "mini-grants" requested by teachers and programs in the Willits Unified School District. Last year, WEF was able to fund 32 different items, "everything from pickle ball paddles to ukuleles." Final figures for the 2017 dinner aren't yet available, but monies

earned are at \$11,000 "and counting," said WEF treasurer Windi Kvasnicka, which is a significant increase from last year.

All the volunteers are gratefully appreciated. "We had some amazing help this year," said WEF President Jenn Drew. "I want to give a big shout out to all the great people that worked in the background. From baking cookies for the last month, the Thursday night tri tip prepping group, the bean prepping group, and the tri tip crew... without you guys, the dinner wouldn't have been possible."

"Thank you Tam [Tam Adams of Emandal] for preparing all the wonderful bread - it was amazing like always. Thanks also, to the group that set up tables and prepped the 200 wonderful salads, and to the crew that came in at 2 pm and helped package all the meals. Thank you to the kids that helped greet the community with their meals and a rose!"

Those interested in getting involved with the WEF group - planning will start soon for this summer's Garden Party at Phil and Kathy Shuster's home - can contact Drew at 707-354-1670 or candlewjen@gmail.com.



Above: A happy diner gets her family's dinner. At far left: Willits superintendent of schools Mark Westenberg gets his tri tip dinner delivered right to his car window by Sydney Kubin. At left: Each dinner for four came with a beautiful rose donated by Flowers by Annette.

The rest of Zip ties | From Page 1

the Sheriff's Office will sell up to 25 zip ties per person. Johnson said zip ties will be available for persons who are not affected by the Medical Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance, the comprehensive ordinance regulating cultivation of medical marijuana on which the board of supervisors has been working since April 2016.

According to the press release: "The zip ties are voluntary and serve the purpose of identifying legal marijuana plants in the field, saving Mendocino County sheriff's deputies time when they encounter these plants. The program was temporarily halted while the board of supervisors worked on the new county ordinance. Although that ordinance is not completed, it will not affect [persons] growing legitimate medical marijuana for personal use."

"To purchase voluntary zip ties," the press release continues, "you must come to the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office stations in Ukiah or Fort Bragg and present a valid medical recommendation and current government photo identification."

In the most current draft (dated March 10, 2017) of the new Medical Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance, Section 10.17.A.030 defines who is entitled to receive an exemption to the ordinance. According to that section, exemptions will be granted only to "qualified patients, persons with an identification card or primary caregivers cultivating medical cannabis." Subsection B1 of Section 10.17.A.030 states: "Any and all cannabis cultivated by a qualified patient or a person with an identification card shall be for the sole and exclusive use by the patient only. Such cannabis may not be provided, donated, sold or distributed to any other person. A maximum of 100 square feet of medical cannabis may be cultivated by a qualified patient."

The press release does not state whether the Sheriff's Office is prepared to sell the maximum number of zip ties to indoor growers only, or whether a person planning an outdoor grow can buy 25 ties.

Commenting on the implications of Johnson's press release, Second District Supervisor John McCowen said in a written statement: "I appreciate that zip ties are being sold to help identify legal medical marijuana plants, but everyone needs to remember they are not being issued as part of a permit program. Nor are they a substitute for a permit that may be required by the ordinance currently being considered for adoption. Based on the current version of the ordinance, once it takes effect, except for limited patient and caregiver exemptions, everyone growing medical marijuana will need a permit from the County Agricultural Department."

Cannabis overlay consultant sought

Mendocino County CEO Carmel Angelo announced last week she is initiating a request for proposals to hire a consultant to help the county draft an "exemption process for cannabis cultivators [seeking] to operate outside an approved zoning district."

The move came in response to a recommendation from the Mendocino County Planning Commission while it was reviewing the Medical Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance. Commissioners felt the ordinance's strict prohibition against cultivating cannabis in residential zones or on Rural Residential 2 zones might seem unduly harsh in some areas of the county, while it might be welcome some neighborhoods.

The commission recommended language creating "overlay districts" be adopted to relax restrictions in some areas. That recommendation was endorsed by supervisors.

In Angelo's March 7 CEO Report, she wrote: "The RPF is expected to be issued by the end of March."

Contacted by Willits Weekly, board Chairman John McCowen said supervisors have yet to lay out parameters of what the "overlay process" will look like.

"There's no clear picture, yet," McCowen said. Supervisors "haven't had a comprehensive discussion on it, except to express a desire to have a comprehensive discussion on it sometime in the future."

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The rest of Taxi | From Page 1

fair, and to consider safety and legal issues brought up by Councilman Ron Orenstein and City Attorney Jim Lance.

City Planner Dusty Duley gave the council a positive assessment at the council's March 8 meeting on his findings regarding Gutierrez and the Nor Cal Taxi service he manages in Ukiah, saying the rates offered in Ukiah were the same Gutierrez submitted for Willits: \$3 for the initial hire, \$3 per mile, and 60 cents per minute wait time.

"Staff recommendation is recognizing that this is a needed service for our community," said Duley. "Upon talking to city staff in Ukiah, Mr. Gutierrez has a good reputation, and they're not aware of any issues with [him] or his drivers."

Orenstein again brought up safety issues at the meeting, saying people getting into cars with strangers was a "whole different situation" than most businesses, but Councilwoman Saprina Rodriguez quickly made the initial motion to approve after Duley spoke.

"I see no need for additional ordinances or rules," she said. "If we want businesses to come into this community, we need to be a business-friendly community and I feel like [Mr. Gutierrez has] gone above and beyond to meet the needs.... Sometimes it's tempting to micromanage business, but the truth is that it's really up to the consumer at some point to decide whether or not this is the type of business they want to use."

Mayor Gerry Gonzalez agreed with those sentiments, adding: "A taxi service into Brooktrails and the surrounding areas is, I think, an important service to the community. In addition to what Dial-A-Ride and the Senior Center do, this is something that will run at the odd hours when those services aren't available."

Willits resident Zach Shabert, formerly a driver for Maria's Midnight Taxi in Lakeport, also spoke at the meeting about the benefits the community could see with regular taxis available, while acknowledging there were always risks for both passengers and drivers.

"In the end, I feel like the town really needs something like this," he said. "I think it's a thing of trust between the two parties. As you do rides in the community, you'll build trust and you'll build relationships with the people you give rides to."

Gutierrez said Shabert was one of the people who really inspired him to bring a taxi service to Willits by telling him how much it was needed here.

While he was originally planning to have just one car to start, Gutierrez says he now would like to start off with two, given the amount of interest from various businesses and others in the community who he's heard from.

He said he already has potential drivers in the area going through background checks and other processes to prepare to work, and he thinks he could have as many as five, including himself, before too long.

"I'm gearing up this week to get all my

The rest of Immigration | From Page 1

Heather Gurewitz, an immigration specialist for U.S. Congressman Jared Huffman.

According to event coordinator Jim Marill, director of Willits Community Services, the meeting will be structured to address five questions: What are the current policies coming out of Washington, DC, and who do they affect? How are they being enforced? How will local law enforcement respond to these policy directives? What are the concerns of the people attending the meeting? And, what can we as a community do about the situation?

Marill said, in addition to the speakers mentioned above, Mendocino County District Attorney David Eyster has responded to questions from the hosting group, and Marill will read his answers when appropriate. Marill added that Eyster was unable to attend the meeting.

Sheriff Allman told Willits Weekly he

marketing collateral up there and start talking to the business owners, the hotel owners, the shop owners, and just let everybody know generally what's going to happen."

Gutierrez has worked in the Ukiah taxi business for five years, managing and driving for Nor Cal, which does business as Hey Taxi. He said even working from Ukiah he would often get calls for Willits.

Hey Taxi operated in Willits from 2005 to 2008 and, according to Gutierrez, contrary to popular belief, did not leave the area for lack of business. He said the owner at the time just didn't feel he had the time and resources to continue working from multiple locations.

Gutierrez anticipates Howard Memorial Hospital, Sherwood Valley Casino and the Willits Airport will be just a few of the regular Willits locations his drivers will be transporting passengers to and from.

Willits Airport Manager Dan Ramsay wrote a letter to the city council, which was brought up at the meeting last week, expressing support for allowing a taxi service, saying many who use the airport would utilize it.

Gutierrez said he would like to have Redwood Taxi available on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week in the area soon, but believes he'll at least have enough drivers to cover 24 hours a day on the weekends, in addition to regular hours on the weekdays to start.

He plans on using cars such as the Subaru Forester with 4-wheel drive so drivers can travel safely through the various terrains and weather of the Willits area when necessary.

Those businesses interested in contacting Gutierrez can email him at redwoodtaxiservice@gmail.com. The phone number for Redwood Taxi will be 707-354-6200, which currently has an informational message.

Other notes

Also at last week's Willits City Council meeting, Duley gave an update he received from Caltrans who said it would provide additional signage on the Highway 101 before May to help businesses in town. He said Caltrans couldn't confirm they would install all that was asked for, but told him it would look into it and do its best.

"We're also exploring the idea of having Main Street being designated as a business loop," he added. "That's a way to direct drivers to understand that if you get off the freeway and come through town you are going to get back on the freeway."

City Manager Adrienne Moore told council members the process of choosing a new police chief was moving along, and the city could expect to have a new chief on board in April.

Willits is scheduled to have LED streetlight upgrades in June throughout town on all PG&E-owned lights - about 350 in total - and may replace other lights as well.

would be at the forum - which he hoped would be a polite exchange of information - to state the Sheriff's Office position, which he says has not changed.

"The sheriff's office policy for patrol and the jail is no different today than it has been for the last five years," he said. "Our policy clearly complies with the law, and it is that everybody who gets arrested, their fingerprints are sent to the Department of Justice, and if ICE contacts us, if they want to talk to somebody, they have to talk to them before they get released from jail."

"We do not hold anybody beyond their release date unless we have a signature from a judge," Allman continued. "Locally, it would be a Superior Court judge or, federally, a federal magistrate. If we get a phone call from ICE, and they don't send us a signed warrant," Allman said, "we won't hold [a prisoner] beyond their scheduled release date."

Willits woman convicted in honey oil case

A 36-year-old Willits woman will be sentenced March 30 after a jury found her guilty of felony aiding and abetting the manufacture of honey oil.

Amanda Marie Sizemore, who is also a part-time Redwood Valley resident, also was found guilty on March 3 of possessing marijuana for sale, misdemeanor child endangerment, possession of marijuana for sale, transportation of marijuana for sale, possession of methadone, and possession of methamphetamine, the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office said.

All the drug charges except those dealing with honey oil were previously felonies, but are now misdemeanors since the November 2016 passage of Proposition 64, DA David Eyster said.

Sizemore's case has been referred to the Mendocino County Adult Probation Department for sentencing recommendations.

"Anybody interested in this matter is welcome to attend the sentencing hearing at 9 am in Department H," Eyster said.

Assistant District Attorney Richard T. Welsh prosecuted the case against Sizemore.

Judge John Behnke presided over the five-day trial.

This report was based on a post on the "Mendocino County District Attorney" Facebook page.

CHP: St. Paddy's Day no time to test your luck

Californians taking part in St. Patrick's Day festivities with friends and family this Friday are being urged to enjoy the party - but to be safe.

"Last year, the California Highway Patrol made 145 arrests statewide for driving under the influence on St. Patrick's Day," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. "Tragically, that same day, three people were killed and nearly 60 people were injured statewide as a result of [drunken driving] collisions."

"We want everyone to enjoy the festivities and have a good time," Farrow said, "but to do so responsibly. Ensuring safety on California's roadways is everyone's responsibility."

Farrow reminds celebrants to "remember to designate a sober driver before the party starts, or make arrangements for a taxi or ride-sharing service."

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports someone in the United States dies in an alcohol-related vehicle collision every 53 minutes. Those deaths and damages cost Americans \$52 billion per year.

The CHP recommends these steps to avoid impaired driving:

Designate a sober driver or have alternate transportation before you go out to drink.

If you are hosting a party, serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages. Stop serving alcohol a few hours before the end of the party.

If you see a friend too drunk to drive, take their keys and call them a cab or ride-share, or give them a ride home.

If you see a suspected impaired driver, call 9-1-1. Your phone call may save someone's life.

Submitted by the California Highway Patrol.

Howard Memorial Hospital names new chief financial officer

By Cici Winiger, for HMH

Judson Howe has been named the new chief financial officer for Howard Memorial Hospital, according to Kevin Erich, interim chief executive officer for HMH. Howe, who has worked as interim finance executive at HMH since August 2016, assumed the official title effective March 8.

"I am excited to have Judson take on this role. In the short time that he's been overseeing our finances, Judson has already made a big impact on improving our business processes, and making sure we are making sound business decisions while remaining true to our mission of caring for our community," Erich said. "The healthcare industry is constantly changing, and it brings me great comfort to have someone of Judson's experience and skills to help us navigate those changes."

Howe has been overseeing finance, accounting and the budgeting process for HMH since the fall of 2016. Prior to this, Howe was regional director of financial services for Mendocino County, where he oversaw the transactional processes of finance and accounting.

"This community and staff are already close

to Judson's heart, and it shows. He is constantly looking for ways to improve the way we do things, and he inspires others to do the same," adds Erich.

Howe, originally from Massachusetts, said he was attracted to the Mendocino region for its rural charm, reminding him of his hometown of 6,000 people. "This hospital truly exemplifies what Willits is about, exceptional people who will really get to know you and treat you like family. I'm honored and excited to help improve our business processes so our staff can be even more amazing for our patients and this community for years to come."

Howe and his family moved to the area in 2013 and have since fallen in love with Northern California. "It's a great place to raise a family," Howe said. "And to be able to contribute my skills to helping this hospital thrive so we can continue to help grow our community is truly gratifying."

Before coming to Mendocino County, Howe served as the director for business intelligence for Glendale Adventist Medical Center. His specialty has been focused on empowering employees to make more informed process improvement decisions, by providing them with key insights and data to help them perform their jobs better.

"I'm passionate about perpetual improvement - making sure that the work we do meets the needs of our staff and our community. It's an exciting time, and I'm looking forward to working with such a dedicated team."

Howe is a certified public accountant and earned his Bachelor of Science degree with a concentration in Accounting from California State University - San Bernardino.

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Above: Howard Hospital's new CFO, Judson Howe.

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Above, from left: Farrah Breen, at left, and Reina Sosa explore magnets at the Exploratorium in San Francisco. Eighth-graders pan for gold at the Sacramento History Museum. Seventh-graders study animation at the Charles Schultz Museum in Santa Rosa. Below: Seventh-graders in front of a large "Peanuts" art piece at the Schultz Museum.

Willits Charter School thinks 'outside of the classroom'

By Michel Chenelle, Language Arts/Social Studies

On the current Willits Charter School marquee, it reads "Enrich Your Child." This year, WCS made the focus of our school "Learning Beyond the Classroom," with the purpose of enriching all sixth through 12th graders with a variety of off-campus adventures.

Students at WCS get a variety of courses to choose from on campus, but not all of our students are able to explore locations outside of Willits. We discussed the importance of taking school days to extend student learning in a variety of urban and natural environments, and we decided to make a commitment that all grade levels would have the opportunity to go on adventures multiple times throughout the year.

School director Jennifer Lockwood, who coordinated most of the field trips, had great success at other schools where they had designated trips students went on every year. "The goal is that students look forward to these trips every year and that they can rely on us to make them happen," Lockwood said.

Because the charter school doesn't have access to buses, it was important that we designated faculty and staff members to make sure all of the trips were organized properly. Organizing field trips involves making sure food arrangements are made, the drivers have safe vehicles and the proper insurance, and that field trip slips are signed and returned. Sometimes students needed to be willing to come to school much earlier than usual, or come back later in the evening.

One of the concerns of having field trips in all grade levels was the cost of the trips. "Almost all of our field trips were low or absolutely no cost," Lockwood said. "I made sure to dedicate at least part of every day to calling a variety of locations around Mendocino, San Francisco, Sacramento, and Sonoma counties to see what they could offer. I received positive responses from everyone."

In addition, scheduling requires designating a portion of the office assistant's time to coordinate the parent/guardians. "In order to schedule this many trips, I could not put that responsibility on teachers; we knew we had to take on much of the planning in the office," Lockwood said.

Some of the places that WCS students have visited

this year were the Charles Schultz Museum and Ice Skating, Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, the Carolyn Parr Nature Center, the Sacramento History Museum, the Exploratorium, Safari West, the Napa Valley Museum, Big River Beach, the Solar Living Institute, Pete's Pumpkin Patch, the Botanical Gardens, and the Children's Creativity Museum in San Francisco. In addition, our high school students will make a variety of trips to visit college campuses, such as the upcoming trip to San Francisco State University.

Field trips have been enriching for the teachers as well, and often act as a form of professional development. For example, our animation class at WCS grew out of teachers attending an animation course in SF with the students, as well as an animation workshop at the Schultz Museum. The trip to see "The Mayhem Poets" at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts sparked a poetry and spoken word unit in our high school Language Arts classes.

Our Independent Study program has also incorporated "UrbanAdventures" into the program. Independent Study students are looking forward to a multi-day trip to San Francisco, where they will attend a professional ballet, visit the Academy of Sciences and the DeYoung Museum, and take walking tours of Japantown and Chinatown, while staying at a local Airbnb. This is surely going to be a trip that these students never forget.

We look forward to wrapping up the year for our eighth-graders with a fun trip to Rebounderz in Rohnert Park! If you have any questions about our field trip programming, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Lockwood at 459-5506.



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The rest of Power | From Page 1

energy sources, and potentially less costly bills compared to PG&E.

SPC's latest assessments show the agency's default CleanStart service uses 6 percent more renewable energy than PG&E, 18 percent more carbon-free energy, and had 1 percent cheaper rates on average.

Local PG&E customers will receive mailed notifications in April regarding their options and details about SCP's practices and policies, and will continue to receive them through August.

There will also be more community outreach coming up from the agency, including a March 16 presentation at the Willits Senior Center from 10 to 11:30 am, and an informational booth at the Willits Farmers Market (3 to 5:30 pm) at the Little Lake Grange.

As they have in Sonoma County since 2014, SCP will contract with suppliers to offer energy "generation" service in Mendocino County, but not delivery and maintenance, which PG&E will continue to provide for all customers.

Those who choose to can opt out and keep on receiving all power services through PG&E. There will be no fee for opting out within the first 60 days of the changeover on the first meter read in June.

SCP Director of Public Affairs Kate Kelly told the council PG&E will still be the contact for power issues such as outages, and there would be no less "priority" given to SCP customers on calls.

"You will not receive any interruption in service as a result of being a Sonoma Clean Power customer," she said. "We are what we like to call competitive partners with PG&E, because we're competing on the generation side but partnering on the delivery side, so effectively, we share our customers."

Kelly added there will be no changes – and no need to reapply – for persons currently in a rate discount program such as CARE. The tier and peak hour systems of charging will also remain largely as they are.

SCP Director of Customer Service Erica Torgerson summarized how electric bills, though still sent through PG&E, will look a bit different for their customers. Instead of the one "bundled" price they've been receiving, the costs will be separated into delivery and generation.

"What many people don't realize when this was a bundled charge was how much of your bill went to delivery – it is often about 55 percent," she said.

There will also be a "Generation Credit" listed, which is what PG&E would have charged for energy generation, allowing SCP customers to compare costs to see if they are saving money and how much.

For those who would like to be extra eco-friendly, SCP offers "EverGreen," a service which uses energy from 100 percent renewable and local sources. "EverGreen" customers will pay about 11 percent more for residential energy.

Currently, energy for the program comes from geothermal geysers in Sonoma County, but Torgerson said SPC is hoping to add solar to the mix soon.

"If we're able to build solar resources here in Mendocino County, we'll be able to add those to the mix as well and potentially someday be able to lower that cost a little bit more," she said.

For their CleanStart service, Torgerson cited an assessment for the year 2015, which showed it derived 36 percent of energy from renewable sources, and 41 percent from hydroelectric, for a total of 77 percent from carbon-free sources. By comparison, PG&E's energy was listed at 30 percent renewable and 59 percent carbon-free, which includes power from nuclear energy (24 percent).

Torgerson said SPC's 2016 numbers, which should be available soon, to show an increase in renewables up to around 40 percent. And while California state law has mandated that energy companies become 50 percent renewable by 2030, SCP expects to get to 50 percent by 2020.

SCP also has a solar energy credit program for customers that's similar to PG&E's, although Torgerson said it will "offer more benefits."

The agency's Net Energy Metering program will continue to credit solar customers who put energy back into the grid at the market rate for that power plus 1 cent per kilowatt hour extra. It also will offer monthly credit updates

instead of yearly, and two cash payouts a year.

Kelly said since 2015, SPC has paid nearly 1,600 customers almost \$900,000 in excess generation credits in Sonoma County.

She recommended anyone using solar power through PG&E contact SPC to prepare their account for the upcoming change. SCP will also be giving a presentation focusing on their solar power program on Monday, April 17, at 6 pm at City Hall.

Kelly added SPC is predicting customers' CleanStart bills over time will go down beyond the 1 percent difference relative to PG&E, based on a March 1 assessment. She noted SCP's generation charges are actually 30 percent less than PG&E's, but a "Vintage Power Charge Indifference Adjustment" fee PG&E requires of SCP customers raised rates significantly.

That fee means customers who switch to SCP will pay the above-market cost of energy PG&E bought "on their behalf" before the change in service.

Essentially, PG&E justifies the fee because the long-term energy contracts they bought several years ago, when energy prices were higher, came "under the assumption that their customer base would not change," she said.

SCP expects the fee to go down, but just when and how much is hard to predict, since PG&E doesn't disclose how it comes up with the amount. Torgerson added SCP is working with PG&E and the California Public Utilities Commission to get more transparency and to lower the fee, which is always factored in when doing rate comparisons.

She also noted that while PG&E's rates change about three to five times per year, SCP tries to change its fees only once a year, using a public process that includes at least four public meetings.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors formally accepted the offer from Sonoma County Power to expand into the county last August. Ukiah is the only city in Mendocino County to decline SPC service, since the city already has its own electric utility for both generation and delivery.

The agency estimates it serves about 88 percent of eligible electricity customers in Sonoma County, meaning only about 12 percent have opted out. According to a September article in the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, SCP claims it saved customers \$62 million and reduced emissions by 48 percent, compared to those who remained with PG&E during the agency's first couple years of operation in the county.

"We really think Sonoma County Power is great because it does provide a choice," said Torgerson. "PG&E has been the default provider here for over 100 years. Nobody's ever had a choice in Mendocino County, and we're happy to bring you that.... We think our cleaner electricity, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and the fact that we're keeping money here in Mendocino and Sonoma counties is a reason to go with us."

Much of the information presented to the city council is available on the SCP website at sonomacleanpower.org, including links for Mendocino customers and a video focusing on billing.

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The rest of LLFD | From Page 1



Above: Little Lake Fire's new water tender.

which mandates that off-year, low-turnout elections be moved to even years. The Willits Unified School District Board will be extending terms for members whose tenures end in 2017 to 2018, so the usual school board election in November 2017 will not be held.

Another factor is a \$2.8 million U.S. Department of Agriculture loan designated to help build a new firehouse in Willits. The USDA is holding the funds through June 2018, and has asked the fire department to let them know the likelihood of the loan being used by that date, or whether they should "de-obligate" those funds. The ad hoc firehouse committee will meet in the next couple of weeks to respond to the letter from the USDA.

Board members also heard reports about new and upgraded equipment. The new Ferrara Fire Apparatus water tender, which was constructed and delivered with an engineering error – it was 3 inches too tall – has been reengineered at the plant in Louisiana and was expected to arrive back in Willits on Wednesday afternoon.

Wilkes told board members he thought Ferrara had done an "outstanding job," fixing their error – which was under warranty. The vice president of Ferrara himself got involved in ensuring the tender was fixed correctly.

"In the end," Wilkes said, "even though it was kind of rough going at first,

they did their due diligence to make it right, and this will be an apparatus the community will be proud of."

Little Lake Fire also has acquired a used fire engine from the Office of Emergency Services. Little Lake Fire had been "in line" to get one of the OES engines, and four just became available. The 16-year-old fire engine that was purchased – a four-door cab with 60,000 miles of use – "runs great," Wilkes said. It is fully outfitted, with a hose array and a re-certified 1,250-gallon pump.

The \$83,000 purchase price does not include the cost of re-painting the engine red – "to make it ours," Wilkes said. Including new doors, that will cost around \$25,000. If purchased new, the engine would cost between \$240,000 and \$350,000, and another \$50,000 would have to be spent to outfit it.

Little Lake Fire's "first-out" fire engine currently, Wilkes told board members, is 32 years old.

Wilkes also told the board Little Lake Fire had had its first call for an incident on the bypass. "We've gone four months with no calls," he said.

The incident – located where the highway passes Sparetime Supply – was not an accident, but a "fully involved" vehicle fire. There was "some convoluted radio traffic," during the response, Wilkes said, but for the "first shot" at a bypass incident, it went well.



Above: Little Lake Fire's newly acquired fire engine, just purchased from the Office of Emergency Services.

Willits woman guilty; March 22 sentencing

A superior court jury on March 8 found Anamaria Mejia, age 43, of Willits, guilty of child endangerment, resisting arrest, and possession of methamphetamine.

All the charges are misdemeanors.

Judge John Behnke, who presided over the three-day trial, also found Mejia in violation of her summary probation.

Mejia was on probation for a July 2016 conviction of petty theft with three prior convictions, now limited to being a misdemeanor by Proposition 47, says Mendocino County District Attorney David Eyster.

Behnke will sentence Mejia on March 22 on all the charges.

Deputy District Attorney S. Houston Porter prosecuted the case against Mejia.

This report was based on a post on the "Mendocino County District Attorney" Facebook page.

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Above, left: The socializing, knitting and crocheting women at the Drop-In Knitting Circle. From left: Beth Riedel, Michaele Mauer, Lotus Baker, Joan Walter, Laurie Howard, Sheri Bond, Toni Amelung and Kelli Weaver. Above, right: A close-up of the beautiful cable sweater Mary Abramson made – and is wearing – while she works on another knit creation. Below: Laurie Howard, at left, learns the Tunisian Crochet stitch from Sheri Bond. At bottom, left: Lotus Baker works with circle knitting needles so she can knit two socks at once. The special needles are good for sweaters, too. Below, right: Toni Amelung works on the front of a tea cozy.

Knitting Circle

Drop-in project group meets on Saturdays at the Willits Library

Every Saturday afternoon, a varying number of people working in mostly yarn meet at the Willits Library for the Drop-In Knitting Circle. On a recent blustery Saturday morning, eight women of the almost 30-member group, left their cozy homes to meet and work on projects and possibly learn new stitches or patterns.

The atmosphere at the Knitting Circle is warm, with interesting talk between members as they concentrate on patterns and stitches. It's a time to socialize, much like many of the circles of women throughout the ages, who gathered to work on everything from grinding corn to making quilts. Besides the sometimes lively talk, "There's often someone who'll have the advice I need," Beth Riedel said, adding, "With a smile!"

Ree Slocum

Features Writer
ree@willitsweekly.com

Projects range from simple knit and pearl scarves to more complicated cable sweaters. There is a woman working in "needle felting" – which, simply said is turning wool fiber into 3D objects – who is part of the group but not in attendance on that Saturday. This day three women were knitting socks, while Sheri Bord taught Laurie Howard a complicated and beautiful crochet stitch named "Tunisian Crochet" and Mary Abramson worked on another cable sweater from a handwritten board of instructions. Toni Amelung was making the front of a tea cozy, while Kelli Weaver and Beth Riedel worked on their projects.

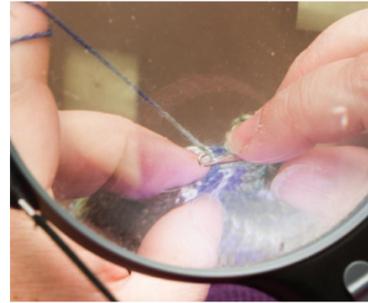
When they advertise it as a "drop-in" group with no sign-up required, they mean it. Recently there was a woman from Pennsylvania who stayed in Willits for one night and saw the announcement about the group in Willits Weekly. She gathered up her knitting project and joined the get-together for the two-hour session. The group is open to all genders, and men who knit or crochet have joined on occasion.

According to Lotus Baker, the contact person for the knitting group: "Bring your own projects or your yarn and needles, we have people who should be able to help solve problems and/or help you learn to knit or crochet. Sign-ups are not necessary - everyone is welcome to drop in."

If you've ever wanted to learn to crochet or knit or already do so and would like to join a lively group, the Drop-In Knitting Circle is at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street, every Saturday from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. Questions? Call Lotus Baker at 456-9037 or email lotusb3@earthlink.net.



Photos by Ree Slocum



Above, left: Using a latch hook, Michaele Mauer stitches up the seam on her newly knitted socks. Above, right: Hexagon rounds are knit and joined together in a beautiful pattern for socks. These were made by Lotus Baker. Below, from left: Beth Riedel shows off the colorful scarf she knit. On her lap is the sweater neckline remake she's working on now. Joan Walters – "Momma Jo" to some – knitting a pair of socks for her daughter, Kier. Kelli Weaver shows off a hat knit by Tabitha Atkinson and given to Weaver as a gift. Wearing the "pussy hat" she knit, Mauer works on knee socks.



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