

Willits Weekly

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A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits
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County settles wildlife trapper lawsuit

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
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Mendocino County announced late Wednesday afternoon it has settled a lawsuit by a coalition of animal rights organizations over the county's Integrated Wildlife Damage Management Program.

"In order to avoid the significant expenditure of public funds necessary to continue to defend the lawsuit," a press release from the Mendocino County Office of the County Counsel stated, the county has agreed to prepare an environmental impact report on the predator control program that will

Read the rest of **Trapper** | Over on Page 10

Bomb threat at Sherwood School

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An April 14 bomb threat at Sherwood School, located 10 miles northwest of Willits on Sherwood Road, shut down the school for a day and reduced student attendance for about a week, according to district Superintendent Patricia Johnson.

On April 26, Johnson told Willits Weekly the situation was investigated and resolved on April 14 and no bombs or weapons had been found on campus. Johnson added she was very pleased with the response from law enforcement, emergency medical responders, and Sherwood School staff.

The threat consisted of multiple sheets of paper with printed messages. One

Read the rest of **Threat** | Over on Page 10

Willits woman guilty of embezzling

It took a superior court jury less than two hours to find a 35-year-old Brooktrails woman guilty of embezzling almost \$500,000 from her Laytonville employer.

Christine Kelly Kelsay will be sentenced May 19 by Judge Ann Moorman. In the meantime, she is being held on \$2 million bail in county jail.

According to a post announcing the Friday, April 22 conviction on the Mendocino County District Attorney's Facebook page, Kelsay began stealing from Geiger's Long Valley Market, where she worked in the store's financial office, in late December 2007 and

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



Photos by
Maureen
Moore

Sweetheart Candidates 2016

The race for Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart starts Sunday, May 1

It's that time of year again, and starting May 1, the four candidates for this year's Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart title will be out selling tickets to all the Fourth of July events. Read a little about each contestant below. Willits Weekly will publish contestants' contact info next week, after the contest has started. Look for posters and cards around town! Stay connected with Willits Frontier Days online at www.WillitsFrontierDays.com. Meet the contestants pictured above, from left:

Calayan Knight

Age and Schooling: 20, Junior at Mendocino College, working towards an associate degree in business. Graduated from New Horizons in 2013.

Horse: Peaches, a 12-year-old mare Quarter Pony.

Residency: Moved to Willits from Laytonville when she was 4 years old.

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

Sierra Skinner

Age and Schooling: 18, Senior at Willits High School.

Horse: Cinder, an 11-year-old Palomino.

Residency: Moved to Willits in 2014 from Senora.

Plans for the Future: Become an agriculture teacher. Study at Shasta College and then return to Willits to teach.

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

Cheyenne Walters

Age and Schooling: 17, Junior at Willits High School.

Horse: Nani, a 16-year-old mare Paso Fino.

Residency: Lived in Willits all her life.

Plans for the Future: Become an X-ray technician, maybe attend Sacramento State.

Riding experience: Enjoys

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

Halee Reed

Age and Schooling: 17, graduating this year from New Horizons via independent study.

Horse: Twilight, a 15-year-old gelding Quarter/Morgan.

Residency: Lived in Willits all her life.

Plans for the Future: Become an underwater welder and

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

Main Street in 10 years:

Fewer lanes, slower speeds, and curb appeal

Damian Sebohian
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If you were to travel in time to Willits 10 years from now, you might have a difficult time recognizing it as the Willits you know today, especially when it comes to the Main Street corridor.

You might see a roundabout at Brown's Corner, and clearly marked bike lanes stretching the entirety of the street.

You might find that where there were five lanes on Main Street south of Highway 20 (including the median), there are now only three lanes (including

Read the rest of **Main Street** | Over on Page 9

Pot regulations

won't be ready for this year's grow

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The county's new regulations on medical marijuana are coming together, but will be finalized too late to affect this year's pot production, supervisors learned on April 18.

In addition to a report by the county's marijuana ad hoc committee (supervisors John McCowen and Tom Woodhouse), the board also heard reports from lead planner Andy Gustafson, Deputy County Executive Officer Sarah Dukett, and Commissioner of Agriculture Chuck Morse at its Monday meeting.

Gustafson said the county

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



2016 contestants, from left: Halee Reed, Cheyenne Walters, Sierra Skinner and Calayan Knight.

Fresno man held in Willits break-in

A Fresno man was arrested early Monday morning by the Willits Police Department following an April 18 break-in at Willits Power Equipment and the April 25 burglary of a Highway 20 nursery near Fort Bragg.

Two men were seen smashing through the door of Willits Power Equipment at about 3:50 am Monday, April 18, according to a press release by WPD Sgt. Jacob Donahue. The men took several Stihl weed-eaters and chainsaws before fleeing in a white, older model Ford pickup with a wooden camper shell.

During the early morning hours of April 25, Willits police officers monitoring countywide law enforcement radio traffic learned of a burglary that had just occurred at Hare Creek Nursery on Highway 20 near Fort Bragg. The vehicle used in that break-in matched the description of the vehicle used during the Willits Power Equipment burglary, Donahue said, and had been seen driving east on Highway 20 toward Willits.

Shortly thereafter, a Willits police officer located the pickup parked in the Safeway parking lot. When deputies from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and WPD officers detained the driver, 22-year-old Danny Spear, they discovered the pickup had been reported stolen by a Fresno resident. In the pickup's bed, they also found

Read the rest of **Break-in** | Over on Page 10

Burn permits required May 1 on state responsibility area lands

Due to fuel conditions throughout the county, CalFire Mendocino Unit Chief Christopher Rowney has announced burn permits will be required prior to any outdoor burning on "state responsibility area" lands in Mendocino County effective 12 am Sunday, May 1, 2016. To see a map of SRAs in Mendocino County, visit http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/sra11_21/sramap.23.pdf.

Burn permits may be obtained at CalFire's Howard Forest Headquarters office south of Willits Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

Burn Permits can also be obtained from the following local agencies (Note: the following agencies only issue permits within their respective districts): Laytonville, Little Lake (Willits), and Brooktrails Fire Departments, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

Before you burn, ensure it's a permissive burn day by contacting the Mendocino County Air Management District at 463-4391, and make sure you have any and all required burn permits.

CalFire reminds everyone that it is their individual responsibility to use fire safely and to prevent fires. Visit www.ReadyforWildfire.org for more information on how to prepare for and prevent wildfires.

Anyone with questions about burn permits is urged to contact Howard Forest HQ at 459-7414 or their local fire department.

Board responds to GJ critics, continues ambulance support

Dan McKee
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While conceding the current method of accounting for Proposition 172 funds "is not easily understood by the public or [the] public safety agencies receiving the funds," the board of supervisors last week promised greater transparency in the process, beginning with this year's county budget.

The action came in response to a February grand jury report criticizing

Read the rest of **Ambulance** | Over on Page 10



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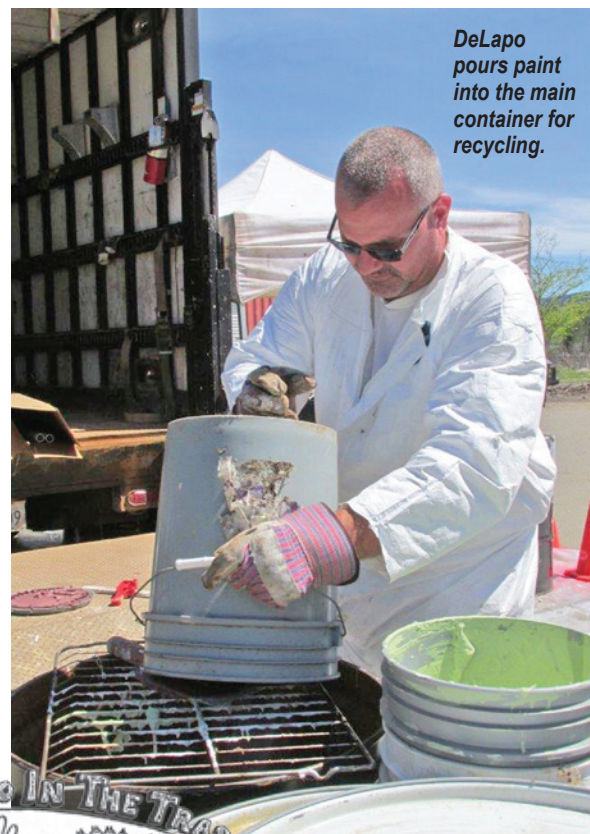
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At left: Hazardous Waste Technicians David Gibson, left, Jon-Paul DeLapo and Daniel Perez, right, in front of the HazMobile truck in Willits on April 16.

Below: The Hazmobile logo from 1996, the program's first year.

Photos by Jennifer Poole



DeLapo pours paint into the main container for recycling.

HazMobile celebrates 20th anniversary

April marks the 20th anniversary of the award-winning HazMobile household hazardous waste collection program of Mendocino County.

The first collection day for the mobile program was April 19, 1996 in Ukiah. "We got rained out," recalls program manager Mike Sweeney. "But we were back the next day

and about 1,000 days since then."

The HazMobile accepts toxic items that can't go in the regular trash from households and small businesses. It is open every Tuesday and Wednesday at 3200 Taylor Drive, Ukiah, and sets up on a weekend schedule in Fort Bragg, Willits, Gualala, Laytonville, and Boonville.

Since its inception, the HazMobile has unloaded toxic waste from 113,106 customer cars and trucks. Three full-time technicians operate the program.

Using state grant money, the HazMobile was set up in



1996 by the Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority, a joint powers agency created by the county and the cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg and Willits. It is funded by a small surcharge collected on trash disposal, along with state grants and charges for business hazardous waste.

The HazMobile schedule is available on the Recycling Hotline at 468-9704 or online at MendoRecycle.org.

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Softball Eden Hincker Tye, 14, Freshman

Position: Catcher
Breakfast of Champions: Frosted Mini-Wheats
Love for the Sport: "I love the intensity of the game."

Years Playing the Sport: 10 years



My nomination for Amazing Athlete this time is Eden Hincker Tye. Eden had a two-run home game for Willits High School against Kelseyville on April 12. She had some great defensive plays: throwing out three runners at second and holding her ground, making two outs at the plate.

As a freshman, she is making her presence known behind the plate. Eden is determined, passionate and tough. A true competitor, who never backs down from any challenge and who has heart, on and off the field.

– Coach Meranda Powers

Golf Brandon Johnson, 18, Senior

Breakfast of Champions: "I like to eat a nice big serving of liver right before a match."

Love for the Sport: "The atmosphere of the game is the best part. Golf has to be the only sport that, after a match, we all sit down and eat together."

Years Playing the Sport: Four years

Willits High School golf team's Brandon Johnson shot an 89 at the April 14 match in Ukiah. Johnson was best on our team and best at the match. Brandon is planning on attending University of Nevada, Las Vegas next year and joining the PGM program. [The Professional Golfers' Association's Golf Management University Program is a 4.5- to 5-year college curriculum for aspiring PGA professionals.]

– Coach Ron Runberg



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