Online & Print Willits A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits **Thursday, June 19, 2025** Donations Accepted Edition No. 597

Hometown **Celebration**

on Saturday

Posted by Willits Frontier Days

annual Frontier Days Hometown Celebration is happening Friday, June 20 from 5 to 9 pm in downtown Willits and you won't want to miss it! This festive evening kicks off the Frontier Days fun and has something for the whole family.

Bring the kids to ride the mechanical bull, enjoy the bounce houses, and scale the rock wall, then explore over 50 vendors offering unique goods, treats, and more.

The free community event features live music by Adam Manus and Jeff Martin, with guest DJ Larry Thompson. There'll be food trucks, henna artist, face painting and more.

Be sure to stop by and support our amazing local businesses, many of which will be staying open late some even offering special in-store deals just for the

We can't wait to see you on Main Street for an evening of community, celebration, and small-town vibes!

School board reflects on the end of school year

Addison Alvarado willitsweekly@gmail.com

On the evening of June 12, 2025, Willits Unified School District held its monthly board meeting. All board members were present and attended this meeting, but outgoing Superintendent Mark Beebe was absent. This meeting included California School **Employee** Association comments, Willits Teachers comments, Association board trustee comments, a public hearing for the 2025-2026 school year budget, and discussions about the consent agenda.

A CSEA representative the opened meeting by discussing the vote taken by the Health and Welfare Consortium to increase medical benefit costs by 35%. This makes maintaining and purchasing health insurance unaffordable for many classified employees, the ČSEA rep said, leaving WUSD employees with limited options.

WTA President Brian Bowles also addressed the board regarding this issue, stating, "The hit that will take to our classrooms is immeasurable," then acknowledging how the state is aiding the unions and district with multiple district issues, expressing that the WTA and CSEA "would love to work with

Read the rest of School

Over on Page 11

GUARD





Above, from left: Willits City Pool Lifeguard Leah Blakely-Swendsen watches over the kids getting ready to get back in the pool after a break. The Willits Pool also received a custom-painted rock from Laurie Bee of Willits Rocks. Erika Quniliven was there early Saturday morning to sign her son Bennett up for swim lessons. Below: Fresh from the water, Lucy King and Macy Lawrence purchase Otter Pops from lifeguards Estrella Mendoza and Jayden Sossaman.



Pool Opens for Season

As temps start to heat up, the Willits City Pool is open for open swim, water aerobics, swim lessons, rentals and more

Summer is just around the corner and the need to cool off and have fun splishing and splashing is too! The Willits City Pool is open now Monday through Saturday and offering many options for young and old to enjoy time in the water.

Lap swim for adults is available in the mornings Monday through Friday, and evening sessions have been added Tuesday and Thursday, too. Otters also have morning and afternoon practice most days; aqua aerobics classes are held in both the evenings and mornings on varying days; and swim lessons also are held in morning and afternoon sessions throughout the week.

Public swim holds down the middle of the day on the schedule all week long, however, starting at noon and running until 3:30 pm each day. Saturdays are public swim days all day, and the pool is open from 11 am to 4 pm.

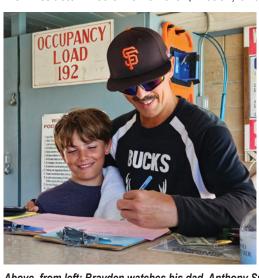
Prices for public and lap swim are both \$5, and a 20 lap swim pass is also available for \$80. Aqua aerobics classes with instructor Nicole Karkar are \$7 each, and there's a senior rate of \$6. You can also purchase an aqua aerobics 20 entry pass for \$125.

Swim lessons are \$50 for each session, but the pool does offer a \$5 sibling discount, up to 4 swimmers. Swim lessons must be signed up for in advance and are offered in two groups; a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 30 minute class and a Thursday and Friday 45 minute class for the 5 years and older swimmers. The one-on-one lessons are tailored to the swimmer's needs.

The pool is also available to rent for private events on Fridays from 6 to 9 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from 4 pm to 7 pm – for a maximum of 50 people. A two-hour rental is \$300 and a three-hour rental is \$400.

For more information or a complete schedule, contact the pool at 707-459-5778 or visit the City of Willits Facebook page for additional information.

- Maureen Jennison







Above, from left: Brayden watches his dad, Anthony Sylstra, sign him into the pool for a day of fun swimming. Maggie Jennison was overjoyed to be signed up for swim classes and get to swim in the "big girl pool" later this month. The diving board is always a fun time during open swim. Below: Lifeguards smile together inside the snack shack, including, from left: Lillie Ungast, Estrella Mendoza, Jayden Sossaman, Timothy Southwick, Kathia Eaton-Geiger and Leah Blakely-Swendsen.



Brooktrails to seek new golf course operator

Barbara O'Reardon willitsweekly@gmail.com

As the full Board of Directors for the Brooktrails Township Community Services District on June 10, the most significant item on the agenda was "Consideration of Resolution 2025-05 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Financial Plan for Services (The Budget)."

Board President Tina Tyler-O'Shea began by opening the public hearing process invited audience members' comments on the item. The

Read the rest of Operator |

Over on Page 11

Fire board adopts preliminary budget

Annie Evarts willitsweekly@gmail.com

The board of directors for the Little Lake Fire Protection District agreed adopt Little Lake's preliminary budget at last week's June 10 board meeting. The preliminary budget is open-ended until a final version is approved at the end of September. Revenue information from sources such as miscellaneous taxes is still yet to be determined, as are final costs for expenses such as workers compensation insurance.

The board also approved the hiring of a seasonal, part-time maintenance

Read the rest of Budget Over on Page 11

Round Valley Prescribed Burn **Association**

inaugural burn

holds

By Sarah Reith, **Mendocino County Fire** Safe Council

The newly formed Round Valley Prescribed Burn Association held its first burn on May 30, scorching 55 acres of grass at the airport just outside town. Since grant funds became available through the county about a year ago, the Round Valley PBA has been offering trainings and spreading the word about the benefits of controlled

Lourance Hall, the codirector of the Round Valley

Read the rest of Burn

Over on Page 12

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

Senior Center FUNDing Raffle Drawing at Hometown Celebration

To the Editor:

We will be drawing the winning raffle tickets for the 2025 Willits Senior Center FUNDing Raffle at the Senior Center's booth at the Hometown Celebration, Friday, June 20, from

Winning tickets for the Senior Center fundraiser will be drawn at 8 pm.

Stop by and see us for information about the Senior Center, and don't miss your chance to buy your raffle tickets before the 8 pm drawing.

Richard Baker, director, Willits Senior Center

Bravo to Christy Murat!

To the Editor:

Anyone who has not yet read Christy's plea in last week's paper needs to do so now. She is the new executive director of Willits Community Services Food Bank, and she is dynamite. The need for food and services is great in this community and has become dire due to federal cuts

It can be difficult to donate food as the office is not open full time and on distribution days there is always a huge crowd. To facilitate donations of non-perishable food, we have placed special containers at Brickhouse, Mendo Mill, and the Willits library.

Please consider taking an extra can of something every time you visit these places. If we all come together in this effort it will make a huge difference. Thank you,

Norma Hanson, Willits Indivisible

Serious questions

To the Editor:

As a former council member and Mayor, and former Chair of the Finance Committee, I was flabbergasted when I listened to the KZYX article on the radio Monday morning and heard of the dire financial situation the city currently

When I resigned from the council in December of last year I did so confident that the city was on strong financial footing with healthy reserves, grant money flowing in, and unspent Measure K and ARPA funds accruing interest.

Imagine my shock when just 6 months later I hear that the city has tapped its reserves, been unable to meet basic payroll, and is \$4.3 million in the hole.

While it's true that the finance department was in a significantly unsound state after having had only a parttime Finance Manager during the worst of COVID years, when Mr. Orozco was hired on he was given the resources to rebuild the department and the support to do what he needed to do to make the system run smoothly.

When he requested new software to replace the archaic system the city had used for almost 30 years and that caused accounting headaches each payroll period, the Measure K Committee saw the logic, approved the expense, and the full council gave the green light.

When Mr. Orozco asked the council to extend the city

The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Willits Weekly prints letters and commentaries about Willits and Third District issues, activities, events, and people. We print letters to the editor from residents of Willits and the Third District only. To encourage a variety of voices. Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once every four weeks.

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. Deadline is end of day Monday for each Thursday edition. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be



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budget cycle from one year to two, so that he could have more time to focus on the audits that hadn't been completed for three years, the Finance Committee again understood the logic and the full council approved the change.

But two years later, when the audits still weren't completed. and the council was being asked to approve a new budget WITHOUT independently audited numbers, it returned the budget cycle to one year in order to keep a closer eve on the ball and demanded quarterly updates from Mr. Orozco on the status of city finances.

That was last year. Now a council with three new members finds itself in the unenviable position of being asked to pass a budget once again with two years of unfinished audits and without a clear idea of the city's actual financial footing. To quote from Shakespeare's Hamlet, "Something is rotten

Why were no warnings given that the city was on shaky ground? Why was an aggressive Capital Improvements Plan embarked upon if the revenues weren't there? Why was the LAIF fund tapped with zero discussion or direction from the previous council? Why did the Finance Director

not know the city was in trouble until "we ran out of money"? These are serious questions, and I hope the Finance Committee and the full council are serious about finding the answers. The Willits taxpayers deserve no less.

Greta Kanne, Willits

Please bring back the Calendar

To the Editor:

in the state of Denmark."

I love your paper. I am concerned, though, about the absence of the Weekly Calendar of Events pages in the last two issues. I hope this is just temporary.

I think that your paper is key in promoting events in our town and area. Fundraisers, art openings, who's playing at the Pub, classes. The success of these events depends on people knowing what's happening, and the paper has been a key way of getting that information.

I think that the calendar is one of the most important parts of the paper. Please bring it back. Thank you,

Richard Tootreese Jeske, Willits

Editor's Note: Thanks Richard, I agree with you about the Calendar's importance. But I am not able to produce it for the next couple of months. We'll keep publishing PSAs and posters for events – email to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Thanks again, Jennifer Poole, Willits Weekly

Correction

Last week's article by new WCS Director Christy Mura was submitted with an incorrect email. The correct email to reach the new director is givinghope@ willitsfoodbank.com

Senior Center menu for the week

Willits Senior Center is serving lunch in its indoor dining room, Monday through Friday, from 11:45 am to 1 pm. Drive-through lunches are available from 12 to 12:45 pm, outside the Senior Center, 1501

Thursday, June 19: Reuben Sandwich, Pickle, Chips Friday, June 20: Meat Loaf, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy,

Monday, June 23: Pulled Pork Sandwich, Carrol

Tuesday, June 24: Country Fried Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Veggies, Roll

Wednesday, June 25: Pork Chops, Rice Pilaf,

Thursday, June 26: Spaghetti w/Meat or Vegetarian

Friday, June 27: Turkey, Stuffing, Gravy, Cranberry,

Activities: Bingo every Friday night, 5 to 7 pm. Exercise class every weekday morning from 9 to 10

Meals on Wheels: The Senior Center Meals on Wheels program delivers lunch Monday through Friday. To sign up call Joliana at 459-6826, who can help fill out the application form. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery. Delivered throughout Willits.

Transportation for seniors: Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments. Senior Center Thrift Shop: 459-2176

The Senior Center is in need of volunteers to help with the many activities here at the center, including volunteer Meals on Wheels drivers. "Volunteers are one-third of our workforce, which allows us to offer many services to our members and community." To learn more about volunteering: 459-6826

A PROCLAMATION OF THE WILLITS CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATING

Willits Western Wear Days

99th Willits Frontier Days

June 20th through July 4th, 2025

WHEREAS, it was 99 years ago in 1926 that the Willits Post 174 American Legion, the Willits Development Association, and local businessmen joined together to sponsor an annual affair over the Fourth of July, we now know this as Willits Frontier Days; and

WHEREAS, Profits from the annual affair would go to help equip the new community hospital to be built in 1927 by Charles S. Howard, of the Ridgewood Ranch south of town; and

WHEREAS, Grateful and enthusiastically wanting to help, the people of Willits under the leadership of the "Legion Boys" with Frank Whitney as Commander joined together to produce a rodeo to help outfit their hospital, and decided then and there to make it an annual affair over the Fourth of July to benefit civic improvement; and

WHEREAS, In 1932 the Willits Fire Department took over the sponsorship of Frontier Days from the American Legion who had assumed all responsibility for the show since 1927. Merrill Williams, former Fire Chief, was the General Manager of the show with Leandro Persico as Assistant Manager. The two men had been active with Frontier Days since the beginning; and

WHEREAS, in February 1950 the Frontier Days Board was formed with Dr. Raymond Babcock, President, Lee Persico, First Vice President, Al Greenberg, Second Vice President, Ed Harton, Third Vice President and Harold Jorgenson, Secretary; and WHEREAS, others that have served as Willits Frontier Days President include: Faris Whitney, Frank Whitney,

Persico, Harold Jorgenson, Rick Crowder, Logan Anker, Dennis Rohrs, Ralph Baker, Jack Tharp, Jim Jennings, Richard White, Kathy Goss, Kent Standley, Dale Briggs, Chris White, Marcy Barry and Fred Barry; and WHEREAS, since 1950 the Frontier Days Board has had many volunteers, but the purpose has stayed the same,

Mel Clatty, Gus Goren, Kenneth Jamieson, Merrill Williams, Galen Hathaway, Louis Zanella, Lee Persico, Chuck

to benefit Civic Improvement. NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tom Allman, Mayor of the City of Willits, along with Vice Mayor Matthew Alaniz, Council Members, Larry Stranske, Gerardo Gonzalez, and Bruce Burton recognize this year's theme as "Traveling Through Generations" and do hereby proclaim June 20th through July 4th, 2025, as

"WESTERN WEAR DAYS"

in the City of Willits and encourage all who enter our community to join us in the rodeo spirit by wearing western

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the Seal of the CITY OF WILLITS to be affixed this 11th day of June, 2025.

Tom Allman, Mayor

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NAME:		
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	1 year - \$100 1 year - \$75	Additional donation included \$ (Home Delivery only available in Willits, Brooktrails & local areas) (call for details)
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Dire Situation

Willits Community Services and Food Bank to run out of funding by October; they are asking the community for help

The new executive director of the Willits Community Services and Food Bank, Christy Murat, brought her concerns, and that of her board of directors, to the Willits Rotary Club lunch last Thursday. She familiarized the Rotarians with the dire situation in which the Food Bank finds itself. In addition to herself, Murat brought her executive specialist, Wendy Copperfield, and had the backing of two members of the Rotary, Dr. John Glver and Rick Williams, who

Mathew Caine

"In the first seven days of stepping into this role, I've had to make some really tough decisions," explained Murat. "The amount of people who we're serving, our households, have tripled since last year. Unfortunately, our government funding has been pretty much gone. The food donations that we're receiving decreased. Our delivery last week was about a sixteenth of what we normally get. No canned food.

are also on the Food Bank board.

"The last weeks, I have had to take money out of our food fund and go and purchase groceries. Our supply is diminished, and our demand is increasing consistently. I don't know how we're going to be able to meet the need in this community. That is really sad for me because this organization has been in the community for two decades now and doing amazing work, helping people. The Food Bank is our primary service. We have additional

Murat has had to make several changes and innovations in order to extend the efficacy of the Food Bank. "I've had to cut the amount of food that people are able to get in order to extend our ability to provide," Murat said. "So now, families are only allowed to come once a week instead of twice. On the plus side, I implemented a new system. One of the things I saw in the back was a lot of people just running around like chickens with their heads cut off. It was very inefficient. People used to come up to the window, got checked in, and staff and volunteers ran around, filling bags and boxes with food and then passing it up.

"Now we are doing what is called, 'The Client Shopping Experience.' We allow five in at a time, and they walk through the aisle and pick what they want off the shelf. It works out better that way because there is a lot less waste, because people are actually getting what they want and can use."

"So, even though they might be getting a little bit less, they feel as though they are getting what they want," added Copperfield. The facility serves over 400 families a week, 200 each distribution day, which are Wednesday and Friday, 11 am to 4 pm. There is what is called "Our Little Farm Stand" out front on those days, in which they offer excess produce that may be going to waste soon. Families can take as much of this as they wish."

Unless the Food Bank can produce funding streams, they may not be able to keep the doors open much longer. Glyer expressed the direness of the situation: "It's getting really bad. There might come a time when we're going to have to decide who gets food and who doesn't. There are different ways to do that. We could say the first 100 people get food and the rest don't. That might not be the fairest way to do it. We might have to prioritize and make sure that certain people get food first. We're not allowed to look at income. I think the board is going to have some difficult decisions to

Williams added, "There's a reason why the Food Bank exists. There's a reason why the Willits Daily Bread exists. There's a reason Fort Bragg exists. I'm telling all of you right now that in six months, we as a community will have to decide what we're going to do. I think it's going to be down to us. I don't think we're going to get a damn thing from the federal government, and we may be lucky to get anything from the state government. It may be down to just Mendocino County and even community to community. In the meantime, in Willits, things are not getting better. They're getting worse.'

Murat would like, in the future, if they can get the funding and food shipments straightened out, to expand the services that are provided by the organization. She would like to be able to provide emergency housing, employment help, and other assistance to those in need.

Murat stated that with the lack of funding and food shipments from the federal and state agencies, the Food Bank will only be able to exist until October. She is searching for grants, endowments, and any other funding streams that may be available to supplement the approximately \$20,000 per month operating expenses. She is also looking for volunteers to aid in the various aspects of the organization.

The Willits Community Services and Food Bank, located at 344 Railroad Avenue, can be reached at 459-3333, and more info is available at www. willitsfoodbank.com/.

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employee, helps to check people in as she scans their cards to make sure they are authorized to receive goods. Warehouse Manager Debby Menesimi has been with the organization through several executive directors. Kathy Leon stands at her station during distribution hours. At left: Food Bank Executive **Director Christy Murat** addresses the Willits Rotary Club. Below, left: Christy Murat has made the office her own with several fanciful objects that brighten up the environment. Below, right: Kingston is a young volunteer















At top, left: The Food Bank hasn't been getting as much like to distribute. At top, right: Warehouse worker Peter Brown helps guide clients through the system. Above, left: Nils Gustafson is the co-warehouse manager and has been at the Food Bank for several years. Above, right: There are always fresh vegetables available for the clients to take home to their families. At left: Volunteers at the Food Bank impart some information to one of the afternoon clients.

Photos by Mathew Caine





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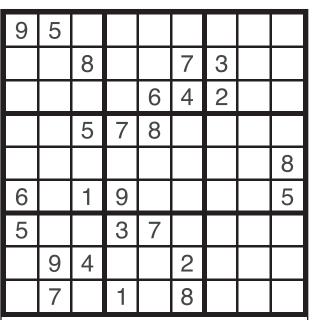






Willits Weekly's Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword



ARMS

BATHING SUIT

BEAT

BOBBING

BREATHING

BUTTERFLY

CAP

COACH

COAST

CLUES ACROSS

5. Range of mountains

12. Musical forms with

a recurring theme

14. On the nature of being

16. Law enforcement agency

18. Australian flightless bird

22. A beaver might build one

of the supernatural

26. American rocker Snider

25. Art ___, around 1920

28. Earliest human:

___-Magnon Man

31. Tough outer skin of fruit

35. Low shrub some call

37. Plants in the chamomile

38. Revolutionary War era

40. Portion of a book

41. Hoover's office

42. Title of respect

33. Alternative form of a gene

19. Subway rodent

20. More dried-up

23. Suggestive

27. Not or

30. Firearm

'fat pork'

1. Type of bread

10. Ended

V L F P X C T O L Y L C O A F F I

COURSE

DIVE

DRAG

DRILLS

EXTENSION

FREESTYLE

GLIDE

KICKING

PACE

44. Tax collector

48. Real estate

50. Boy's name

55. Hit lightly

56. Bar bill

57. Atomic #54

63. Fish sauce

67. Tense

58. Devotes again

65. French stock market

66. Things that consist

CLUES DOWN

1. Retired game show

3. Israeli city ___ Aviv

5. A type of analyst

7. Gasteyer and de

Armas are two

9. Opposite of yes

8. Ran without moving

10. Diffuse clouds of gas

11. Mentioning one by one

13. Instruments used to dilate

host Sajak

2. Equal (prefix)

4. Loved

6. Ad __

of two elements or parts

52. Airborne (abbr.)

53. Strongly recommends

45. Cool!

T E D R I L L S E S S M R A T

PADDLE

POOL

POSITION

POSTURE

PROPULSION

ROTARY

SCISSOR

SPEED

SPEEDO

SUDOKU

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

12:46 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Holly Street and issued a warning

6:38 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 100 block of California

9:31 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 600 block of South Main Street.

11:50 pm: MEDINA, Javier Borion (53) of Willits was contacted in the 1200 block of South Main Street. He was arrested on felony charges of violation of probation and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

1:26 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued

3:22 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 100 block of South

6:54 pm: Officers responded to a report South Main Street.

10:45 pm: Officers conducted a stop

Free herbal tea class at Grange Garden, June 28

Submitted by Grange Garden

Drink a cuppa tea with us at the Grange Garden on Saturday, June 28, at 1 pm, at 291 School Street

Taste some good things in the garden, try some different versions of herbal summer iced tea and hot tea.

Having a cup of herbal tea is one of the most relaxing moments of a day!

There are many wonderful tastes awaiting you in the herbal kingdom of teas. Mint, lemon balm, lavender, rosemary, sage - each one of them has a special offering for your health and well-being.

Learn more about tea making at this June 28 workshop, and get handouts about herbs and wellness.

4:50 am: Officers initiated a theft

9:11 am: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 100 block of

7:46 am: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 100 block of

10:17 am: Officers responded to a report

10:52 am: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 1700 block of

4:36 pm: Officers initiated a fraud

10:23 am: Officers initiated a fraud

11:38 am: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 1400 block of

4:23 pm: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 100 block of

9:21 pm: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 100 block of

7:16 am: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity in the 800 block of

1:34 pm: Officers responded to a report

of suspicious activity near the intersection

of Poplar Avenue and Madrone Street.

investigation in the 1700 block of South

investigation in the 100 block of East

of vandalism in the 200 block of East

South Main Street and issued a warning.

investigation in the 200 block of East Valley

The officers of the Willits Police near the intersection of Walnut Street and

East Commercial Street.

Commercial Street.

South Main Street.

Commercial Street.

Main Street.

Baechtel Road

Alder Court.

North Main Street.

Department reported **47 incidents** in this South Main Street and issued a citation. 7-day period. June 5

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE LOG

June 2 to June 8 By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

1:30 am: JORDAN, Dustin Lee (46) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Williams Street following a report of trespassing. He was arrested on felony charges of second-degree burglary, assault with a deadly weapon other than a firearm, and property damage in excess of \$400, and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (loitering), possession of a controlled substance, and possession of burglary tools.

June 3

STROKE

SWIMMING

TEAM

TECHNIQUE

TIRE

TREAD

TUMBLE

WATER

WAVE

15. Freshwater fish

17. Remotely-manned

flying objects

21. Renews

23. Not the start

24. Pitching stat

29. Ceramic jars

32. I (German)

34. Something to

toss on a fire

36. A series of acts

39. Egg of a louse

degrades

54. Stiff structure

60. North Atlantic fish

61. 8th month (abbr.)

62. Make an effort

64. Commercial

43. Travelers

44. Drink

51. Upset

59. Father

at a night club

40. Inquire too closely

46. Behave in a way that

47. Electronic music style

49. Northern Ireland city

resembling a hair

35. The process of flowing in

18. Doctor of Education

27. Small water buffaloes

of suspicious activity in the 1700 block of

'Picture This!' at the Museum, June 24 Submitted by Friend of the Museum

The Friends of the Mendocino County Museum invite the community to a special publicity event, "Picture This!," at the Mendocino County Museum Courtyard on Tuesday, June 24, from 5 to 7 pm.

The Friends of the Museum look forward to capturing lots of pictures of the Museum grounds to promote and encourage future use

All are welcome to use this event and the backdrop of the Museum Courtyard, to capture pictures of your organization, staff, or family.

We invite everyone to enjoy music by Too Much Fun, mingle, get tips from Willits in Business, and enjoy a no-host dinner from Turtle Island Tacos. Photography by Maureen Moore will be documenting the evening. This is a free event, open to all. Mendocino County Museum is located at 400 East Commercial

COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

'How to Train Your Dragon'

Dan Essman

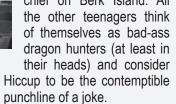
The Story: A live action remake of the quite popular 2010 animated flick of the same name. It is a movie made for children. In Hollywood, Vikings were more than

just violent drunken thugs. Picturesque movie Vikings all have furry beards and metal helmets with horns, and are crazy-brave and are sometimes comical, and they are the stout noble

guardians of Northern Lands. A brave cohort of guardian Viking families

was sent (I don't know by whom) to the No more spoilers. craggy island of Berk because the island was being savaged by sheep-stealing sorties of fire-breathing dragons. Big dragons. Small dragons. Roly-poly fat dragons. Two-headed dragons. Also there were some shadowy creatures, barely seen, which were scary to the Vikings and spoken of with awe called,

"Night Furies." Hiccup (Mason Thames) is the nerdy and quite inventive (though no one seems to notice) teen son of the Viking



Meanwhile, Hiccup believes that he's built a weapon to capture a Night Fury. He hopes to impress his uber-Viking father. But maybe more importantly, Hiccup is secretly in love and he wants to impress the beautiful, hyperathletic warrior-girl Astrid (Nico Parker). Dragon battles happen. DRAGON

Hiccup falls from a great height Astrid notices Hiccup. There are even a few brief but solid kisses. My Thoughts: I enjoyed the spectacle. This is a good movie for children, with a few oddly incoherent scenes when I wondered if it was written by children,

effect. No blame on the kids. Parents: True love is rewarded. Virtue triumphs. The good guys win. Kindness carries the day. It's a happy movie.

who don't always understand cause and

Willitsian Daniel Essman prefers his reality attenuated by the wisdom of the







Above, from left: Leticia Sierra, lead cook at Redwood Market's Aztec Grill, stocks freshly made burritos into the grab-and-go case. Order in-store or online by scanning the QR code. Store manager Sierra Phillips holds one of each of the four salsas available at Aztec Grill. Below, left: Redwood Market and Aztec Grill employees include, from left: Elizabeth Torres, cook; Leticia Sierra, lead cook; Sierra Phillips. store manager; Steve Harries, customer service representative; and Julie Weir, district manager. Below, left: One of the most glorious combinations offered at Aztec Grill is the potato, egg and jack cheese breakfast burrito, with hot red salsa on the side. Pour a little on for each individual bite.





Redwood Market Redo

Aztec Grill and Redwood Market receive facelift, but still offer delicious breakfast and lunch options

It felt like far more than five months of de- and reconstruction as dedicated customers waited impatiently for the reopening of Redwood Oil's Redwood Market and Aztec Grill to once again be able to get what could quite possibly be one of the tastiest breakfast burritos in town.

But the wait was worth it. The stores, located at 781 South Main Street, received a big glow up on the inside, increasing the floor space for

Maureen Jennison

retail, making a more userfriendly kitchen for the cooks, a bigger area for the grab-and-go food section, and a more open, airy and bright space.

"It was certainly time for a store remodel," explained Redwood Oil District Manager Julie Weir. "It needed a refresh, upgrades and a facelift. We removed the side door and really opened up the floor space to make additional room for merchandise and customers. We also expanded

One of the improvements also includes the large new display cold case, which offers chilled beverages along with a healthier selection of salads, wedge sandwiches, fajita bowls, parfaits, fresh fruit, fresh salsa, wraps, chicken tenders, and more, all made in-house, fresh daily by the

There's also the hot grab-and-go case – containing the store's biggest seller, a variety of prewrapped burritos, quesadillas, breakfast sandwiches and more, also all made in-house and fresh daily which are ready and available for quick purchase. On average, the store sells about 80 burritos a day.

"Lots of people love the convenience of the grab-andgo," explained Weir. "They can just pop in on their way to work and grab a hot-and-ready meal.

Of course, you can always order off the menu for exactly what you'd like. A personal favorite for breakfast is the potato, egg and jack cheese burrito – with a hot red salsa on the side. Pour a little bit on each bite as you enjoy. For lunch? Can't go wrong with the grilled veggies burrito: Peppers, broccoli, onions, zucchini, substitute wheat wrap for regular flour, with black beans, and no salsa.

Meaty bites more your style? Toss in some chicken, bacon, ham, chorizo, sausage, steak, al pastor, carnitas, birria or shrimp. You can also add in meat-free chorizo, grilled veggies, or a chile relleno, too. Additional toppings available include four types of salsa, jalapenos, sour

cream, cheese, guacamole, rice, beans, extra meat, and more. You also get a choice of beans: black, pinto or refried.

Some Aztec specials include the Cowboy Burrito: BBQ pulled pork, rice, black beans, jack cheese and onion stringers on a flour tortilla; the Border Burrito: steak, French fries, jack cheese, sour cream, guacamole and salsa on a flour tortilla; Aztec Tacos with your choice of meat on corn tortillas with cilantro, onions and mild tomatillo salsa: and Quesabirria: Two birria tacos with melted cheese in a crispy shell served with consomme.

Taco platters, fajitas, burrito and breakfast burrito bowls, nachos, quesadillas, torta sandwiches, taquitos and eggwiches are just a few more of the offerings on the main menu. Redwood Market is also now offering family chicken

Aztec Grill is open 5 am to 3 pm Monday through Friday, and from 6 am to 3 pm on Saturday. The grill is closed on Sunday, but the grab-and-go cases are stocked for pick up. Customers can call in orders 707-459-1779 or order online through scanning their QR code or through their app. You can get your convenience store items, and food and drink items, ready and delivered right to you.

Using the app, or entering your phone number at the register now also gives customers special deals that work like a punch card; there's different deals each day of the week for buy-one, get-one offers; customers can buy 5 coffees or mates, or energy drink, and get one free; customers buy seven burritos and get one free; and more. Getting fuel at the Chevron pumps also earns customers

Redwood Bucks; every time someone fills up with 10 gallons or more, they earn \$1 Redwood Buck they can use to purchase goods in the store. They add up, and don't

"Our store manager Sierra and the rest of the team has been amazing through this upgrade and transformation," said Weir. "It's still the same crew, cooking the same food from before the remodel. Everyone did their part, and we're happy to have such a loyal and long-term team. Everyone knows their job, and they all work and communicate so well

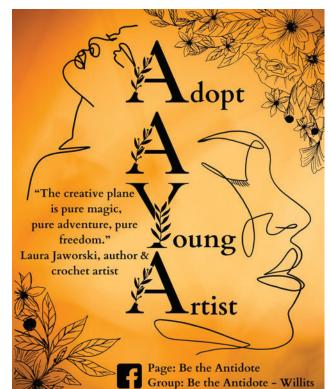
"Julie's been so amazing, too," said Sierra Phillips, store manager. "She's been with Redwood Oil for a long time and has made this a really nice place to work. She's a Below: Redwood Market's remodel opened up the floor space inside the shop, including the new grab-and-go cold case, and gave the exterior a face-lift, too. At bottom: Leticia Sierra rolls up burrito in the newly redesigned prep area.











FRIDAY, JUNE 20TH 5 PM - 9 PM SPARETIME Tardener's Panty Come Visit our Booth on Main Street **STORE HOURS** Mon - Sat

208 E. San Francisco Ave.

WHS ALL 80'S CLASS REUNION SATURDAY JULY 5TH. 2025 5 PM TO 9:30 PM Join your fellow WHS alumni for an unforge

† Location: The garden patio at Whistlestop Café ₹ Local wine, beer, and non-alcoholic options Included | Fresh Taco Bar:

🖟 Live Music: Get ready to hit the dance floor as local Willits band

For More Information

https://www.facebook.com/groups/315308430857720

EMAIL: WILLITSHIGH85@GMAIL.COM HOSTED BY WILLITS HIGH CLASS OF 1985

8 am - 6 pm

roup: Be the Antidote - Willits

WHS softball field to be

dedicated in honor of Coach

Cari Stiles, June 21

In conjunction with Willits Unified School District, the Stiles-Williams Family is happy to announce the decision

to name the Willits High School softball field the Coach

Cari Stiles Field. The field dedication honors the memory

of Cari Stiles, who the Willits community unexpectedly lost

The dedication ceremony will be held at the Willits High

Coach Cari Stiles' absence is deeply felt throughout

School softball field at 11 am on Saturday, June 21, 2025.

the town, among her friends and her family. However,

her legacy, impact and love for the game of softball

Submitted by the Stiles-Williams Family

in January of 2024.

from a young age.

kids to become involved

in athletics and extra-

Cari was known for

curricular activities



Below, from left: Monte and Anne Vander Horck set up their homemade sign made from Anne's crafted lettering. Gloria Minjares and Norma Minjares Yasinitsky wear bright neon green depictions of the administration. Apropos of the No Kings Day rally, Mary Guibert created a sign with the upside down distress flag of the United States. Mary Burns and Richard Mitchell, in his outfit from Cameroon, show their support for the gathering. At bottom, from left: Signs depict the participants' feelings about what is occurring politically in the country. Participants first gather at Babcock Park in preparation for the procession to City Park. Ethan Rutherford and Aradia Myrrh created these signs to express their concerns. At right: Michael Ducharme displays his colors at the gathering in Babcock Park and his No Kings hat. Aurelie Clivaz takes a moment to discuss the cause with Wolfgang Ronnefeldt. A young Hispanic woman tells her feelings about how immigrants make the country better.











to protect against having utilities turned off. Bruce Hilbach-Barger speaks about the politics of

Mendocino County energy companies and political parties. Christopher Martineau of Eclectric Solar

explains ways in which people can use less energy and upgrade to electric appliances. Robin Leler

writes attendees' suggestions for saving energy on the white board in the library conference room.

Below: The conference room at the Willits Library is filled with people interested in ways to save

energy and money. At right, from top: Denise Jessie, Willits branch librarian, introduces the participants in the forum. Joanne Moore consults with members at the Senior Center on ways

Photos by Mathew Caine





Coach Cari Stiles will be honored in the Cari Stiles Softball Field dedication, on Saturday, June 21.

her unforgettable laugh, selfless demeanor, and dedication to the support of student-athletes on and off the field.

The dedication ceremony, Saturday, June 21 at 11 am, will provide an opportunity for the community to come together to celebrate Cari's life and true passion for the

There will be concessions with food and drink, and a pick-up/ alumni softball game after the ceremony. The game is open to anyone to play. There is a \$10 entry fee (donation) to participate in the game. Any funds raised will go towards field dedication signage and the WHS Softball program for repairs to the dugouts and backstop.

We encourage and welcome everyone to attend as we remember Cari Stiles and her dedication to Willits Unified School District and the WHS Softball program.

You may contact Holli Woodhouse with any questions about the event or ways to donate: 707-354-0053.

Katharine Cole and the Brittle Season at WCT, June 21

By Steve Hellman for WCT

Mendocino County's own Americana singer-songwriter Katharine Cole and the Brittle Season Trio make their premiere appearance at the Willits Community Theatre on Saturday, June 21 at 7 pm. Cole will perform from her Grammy-nominated 2015 album "Brittle Season," backed by guitarist Jean-Francois Buy, bassist Anthony Melville, and drummer Yvonne Boyd.

Cole says her performance of the album in its entirety provides a cathartic rendition of her personal journey through her break-up after a 10-year relationship. She says she'll be spicing up the show with some of her personal story in between the songs.

In a career spanning nearly five decades, Cole has performed punk and rock in Hollywood clubs, held court at the Paradise Lounge in San Francisco as a top draw in the Americana circles, produced a country phase through the early 2000s, and then a playful rockabilly vein. Most recently she has returned to her Americana roots, with this introspective set of songs from "Brittle Season."

"By writing songs that were intensely personal for me," Cole says, "I realized my music appealed more to people, where they could identify with my experience. The songs hit a chord and provide a look into our common humanity."

With this album Cole says she had to give herself permission to go further than ever before with her songwriting,. "Writing the fun stuff is fun, but with Brittle Season we're giving people a real experience.'

Opening the show will be Frankie and the Lost Souls from Caspar. Tickets are \$20 and expected to sell out, so early purchase is encouraged at: www.wctperformingartscenter. org. Season Sponsors for WCT are NC Financial Group, Community Foundation of Mendocino County, Penserra, KZYX Radio, KLLG Radio, Jerry Drew Painting, Julia Morgan Redwood Grove, and Big Fish Construction.



No Kings

An estimated 600+ people marched through town on Saturday in protest of Trump's policies and actions

American historian and author Howard Zinn said: "We don't have to engage in grand. heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world."

Mathew Caine

Over an estimated 600 local residents brought their voices to bear in an action last Saturday, Coinciding with Flag Day, Donald Trump's military parade, and the new pope's rally, the crowd first met at Babcock Park, where they displayed their placards and

After a speech by Melinda Clarke, they formed up on the sidewalk for a procession through town to City Park where they were greeted by even more concerned townsfolk. The upbeat message reflected the overall feeling of the event, one of positivity and an imagining of a world with inclusivity, equality and diversity, the qualities that they perceive are the basis of the strength and power of the United States.

banners, declaring their feelings about what they perceive as several egregious actions

"We're having a great time today with a parade and march that are meant to counterbalance what is going on in D.C. right now, with tanks rumbling through the streets at the cost of millions of dollars to celebrate the army but also to celebrate Trump's birthday," explained Kim Bancroft, activist and organizer.

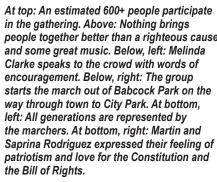
"What we've seen Trump doing these days has just been outrageous," said Bancroft. "Most recently, I've been most outraged at the attack on our Senator Padilla, who was in a press room, asking a question and was wrestled out of the room. You hear him saying, 'I'm Senator Padilla,' and he was wrestled to the floor, trying to find out about what's going on with the role of the National Guard and others who are trying to bring down immigrants.

"There are so many outrageous things that are going on," Bancroft said. "One of my big things is the defunding of so many social services. And we see that locally here, the Food Bank has been losing money. We, as

Read the rest of part of [Willits] Indivisible, are trying to support local organizations and raise

and policies of the current administration.

At top: An estimated 600+ people participate in the gathering. Above: Nothing brings people together better than a righteous cause





Forum about saving energy and money is first in a series of talks put on by WELL and the Willits Branch Library

Last Saturday at a forum titled "Save Energy," was "Today, we're going to have an overview of where

Mathew Caine in which to minimize wasting of electricity, thus reducing household bills.

The first of a series of Sustainable Willits events, the Save Energy forum brought together experts in various aspects of energy consumption. Crispin Hollinshead is an advisor to Sonoma Clean Power. Jason Kester is with North Coast Energy Services, a company that helps weatherize and seal homes to make them energy efficient and less wasteful. Christopher Martineau has a solar-installation company called Eclectric Solar and has knowledge of appliances and solar systems. Joanne Moore consults at the Senior Center and councils people on programs that will keep the lights on for lower income individuals. Davey Bowles, with the City of Willits, spoke on a program that loans homeowners money to do repairs on their homes, which includes certain

weatherizing improvements.

"I co-organized this forum with Denise Jessie from the library, and with several members of the WELL coordinating committee," explained Madge Strong. "We're hoping that this is the first in a series of Sustainable Willits events. This one is on saving energy and saving money. The next one is going to be about trying to reduce our garbage footprint. What things can we actually recycle and reuse and cut down on all the waste products. At the third one, I believe we're targeting water conservation. That will be towards the end of summer when we're going to need to be mindful of conserving water. In the good years, the reservoirs for the City of Willits are enough to get us through until it rains again.

full of information and suggestions that would save we get our energy from and the impact of that, not energy and money. Five speakers and two hosts only on our pocket, but also on the environment," presented facts, opinions and statistics, along with said Strong. "It will also be about practical ideas for hints on how to best utilize how you can reduce your energy use and lower your electric appliances and how to bill. There are a number of ways we can conserve. I create a personal environment did a report a few years ago about how much energy is wasted by thermal heat going out into the air. Every unit of energy that you don't use actually saves at least two units of energy because it takes almost an equal amount of energy to deliver that energy to you. Energy conservation is, essentially, a very ripe way and environmental way to reduce our fossil fuel impact and reduce our bills.

> Hollinshead was the first speaker. "Sonoma Clean Power has about 92 percent of Mendocino County. other than Ukiah, which has its own municipal power company," Hollinshead said. "Everybody else is in PG&E. Sonoma Clean Power is a community choice aggregate. They're publicly owned, and they will procure power and ship it to you over PG&E transmission lines. Sonoma Clean Power will get you 100 percent renewable power and their costs are less than PG&E. Their corporate mission is to meet or beat PG&E prices. Last year, if you were a Sonoma Clean Power customer, you paid seven percent less than your neighbor who has PG&E."

> Martineau spoke next and told the attendees: "One of the things that people run into is the upfront costs of upgrading. Energystar.gov has information about appliances. It's extremely easy to navigate. You can go to the 'find products' tab and go down to the rebate finder and it will tell you what kind of rebates are available for you in your zip code. Most of these are going to be for heat pumps which are basically your HVACs, heating and cooling. You might be familiar

Read the rest of Over on page 9 Sustainable







Willits Farmers Market, Thursdays at City Park

Join your neighbors on Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Willits Farmers Market at City Park, with vendors along State Street on the north end of the park. For the freshest local produce, local meat, farm fresh eggs, hot dinner, tasty treats, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. Consider parking at the City or Skunk Train parking lots. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits with Market Match, to double your food dollars. Every first Thursday of the month: June 5 this month Meet the Library at the Farmers Market, 3 to 4:30 pm, with library card signups; information about library services and events, and an activity for the









WILLITS CENTER FOR THE Is looking for people to volunteer to teach Art History to young students.



Inspire the next generation share your passion for art and culture for the next generation For more information:





SPIRITUAL **PATHWAYS**

Agape **Bible Church**

290 S. Lenore Ave. Willits,CA 95490 Where love is first and the Bible is central. Sunday Services: 10:00 a.m. - Worship ılt Sunday School 8:30 a.m Info? 707-459-1905 ww.agapebiblechurch.com

Amazing Grace ssembly of God Church 803 Coast Street P.O. Box 489, Willits

Worship Service - 5:00 p.m. Pastor Kris Strickland VERYBODY IS WELCOME

Church of Christ What must we do to be saved?

Acts 2:37 1095 S. Main St., Willits (next to Super 8) (707) 459-5023 unday Bible Study-10:00 a.m Sunday Worship-11:00 a.m. Sunday Evening Service-Wednesday Bible Study-7-8:00 p.m.

The Church of **Jesus Christ of** Latter-day Saints

265 Margie Drive Willits, ČA 95490 ALL ARE WELCOME Sacrament Meeting Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

kankar: The Path **Spiritual Freedon** A University for Soul

Spiritual Living Courses piritual Discussions . CK Light & Sound Services More information? Call 530-224-8703 www.eckankar.org

Grace Community Church

Celebrating Life In Christ 25 Hazel Street, Willits Worship Service 10 a.m. For appointments call:

(707) 459-3106

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

61 W. San Francisco Ave. Willits, CA 95490 Father Aaron Bandanadam Mass times: Saturday-5:30 p.m. Sunday-9:00 a.m. - English 10:30 a.m. - Spanish Confessions on Saturday 4:45 - 5:15 p.m.

Or by appointmet at 707-459-2252 ttps://stanthonywillits.org/ ntanthonywillits@gmail.com Ve welcome All Walks of Faith

St. Francis **Episcopal Church**North Main Street, Willits 707-272-0177

Sunday Service - 10 a.m. In-person and on Zoom Call for information. ALL ARE WELCOME The Rev. Betsy Bruneau

St. John utheran Church

Sunday Service 10:00 a.m. (707) 459-2988 24 Mill Creek Drive cebook.com/stjohnswillits ALL ARE WELCOME

Willits Seventh-Day Adventist Church 707-459-5714

Friendly, open worship Saturdays Bible Study - 9:30 a.m. Worship Service - 10:45 a.m. Zoom Transmission Available Wednesday

Prayer Meeting - 7:00 p.m. 399 W. Mendocino Ave. All are welcome!

Willits United **Methodist Church**

abyrinth and Peace Garden A place to find comfort where all are welcome astor Jaime Rogers-Fairchild Sunday Worship at 10:30 am 286 School St. (at Pine) 707-459-2855 wumc@outlook.com www.willitsumc.org acebook: facebook willits umc

vou want to be included ir this column please call: April Tweddell (707) 972-2475 april@willitsweekly.com

gtm1950@gmail.com or 707-972-3326















them to a trellis as they grow. Okra is amazingly fast and easy to grow if you pick one of the smaller varieties like "Cajun Jewel" shown here. You can plant now and cook it in August. Basil is a great companion plant for peppers or tomatoes, both in the garden and on the plate. The flowers are great in salad, and attract beneficial insects to eat pests. Replanting every

Top row, from left. If you grow bush

beans for fresh

eating or canning, be

sure to keep making

new plantings for a

continuous supply.

Marona is new this

year at Quail Seeds

and gives great yields

even when stressed

"suckers" are the new

branches that sprout

from the base of a leaf

or twig. Indeterminate

by heat or pests.

So-called tomato





At top, from left: Fast-growing and easy to fit in with other plants, Tiger Coreopsis is a perfect summer refresh for the garden. People and butterflies both love zinnias! Cosmos are quick and easy flowers either on their own or among other plants. Blacktail Mountain is the earliest watermelon, ready in a few weeks. Above, from left: A new hot-weather vegetable that gives a fast, delicious harvest is Carosello, an Italian heirloom. It is a melon picked early and used as a cucumber- - delicious, crisp. and never bitter. Sweet corn is one of the real treats of summer, and surprisingly easy to grow. It helps to grow varieties bred for the West, like Top Hat, Festivity, or Zanadoo, shown here. You can direct-sow melons now, and the Eel River Melon is a local classic with fantastic flavor. Huerfano Bliss is a honeydew melon with fragrant, delicious orange flesh. It's an heirloom from the Colorado desert, so it grows well in hot, dry conditions. Summer lettuce benefits from afternoon shade. It is a good companion for taller vegetables like squash, tomatoes, or corn.











COLUMN | Garden Tip of the Month

June: Growing tomatoes: bad and good advice

Now that the soil is really warm, plants can sprout and arow quickly, provided they have everything else they need. Water, of course, but also soil nutrients, soil life, and soil oxygen. That last is something we tend to forget, but compacted soil, heavy clay, or waterloaging can all smother plant roots or even kill them

Let air in by using plenty of compost, both worked in at planting and as a mulch. Even if it's just on the surface, worms and other critters will eventually carry it into the soil for Jamie Chevalier you. Mulch is a critical shelter for

soil organisms during summer heat, and allows plant roots to live in the top inch of soil, which would otherwise be too hot and dry.

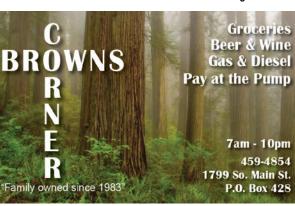
One question that comes up this time of year is tomato pruning, training, and support. Many books and websites tell you to prune indeterminate tomatoes to one stem, pinching out the "suckers" (actually the new branches that sprout in the crotches where leaves meet the stem). Professional growers use overhead rails, strings, and clips to train their tomato plants as a single vertical stem with clusters of fruit growing from it. Should we be doing that?

The answer is that like most other aspects of gardening. it depends on climate. In places like England, Seattle, or Maine, summers tend to be cool, and severe pruning helps the plant to ripen more fruit. Even in places that get a lot of heat, like the South or Midwest, there is often cloud cover or humidity in the air, which diffuses the sun's rays. Each tiny droplet of water sends the light in a slightly different direction, softening its effect in the same way that a frosted light bulb does. Shadows aren't as dark, and lighted areas aren't as bright. This is obvious during overcast weather,



Happy Day

model, for loving us inconditionally, and Happy Father's Day! Love Meg & Sarah



Father's Dad, thanks for being such an amazing role for putting up with us. We're grateful for your



willitspower@gmail.com

Un desayuno y almuerzo saludables se brindan GRATIS a niños de 0 a 18 años, inscritos en WUSD o no, independientemente de sus ingresos. Disponible de lunes a viernes, del 9 de junio de 2025 al 8 de agosto de 2025, en la Escuela Primaria Brookside Elementary School.

 Desayuno de 08:00 a 09:00 Almuerzo de 11:00 a. m. a 12:30 p. m. *Almuerzo caliente en el lugar o comida fría para llevar*

When the air is dry, nothing bends or breaks up the sun's rays. If humidity makes the sun more like a florescent light, dry air lets it act more like a laser. Any surface that faces the sun directly heats up so much that tomatoes, peppers, apples, and other fruit can literally cook in spots, which we

I've seen people who learned to farm in the Northwest spend hours training tomatoes to single stems with elaborate supports - only to lose them all to sunscald. Growing tomatoes outdoors in Willits, we need leaves to shelter the fruit. As a bonus, the leaves make sugars to power growth and sweeten the tomatoes. Cherry tomatoes are less susceptible than slicers, because their small round shape has less direct exposure

Determinate varieties are fairly self-supporting and can get by with commercial tomato cages or a couple of stakes. The big yummy indeterminates, though, need serious support and can grow to at least 6 feet. Wire cages are ideal to support these big plants. Another possibility is a wire trellis, which works as long as you are willing to tie or weave the plants into it every few days.

One bit of pruning I do recommend is to remove all the leaves at the base of the plant. As a vine, the plant is constantly putting its energy upward and out to the growing tips, so the lower leaves naturally atrophy and die back. Mites, thrips, and other pests climb up from the ground to infest those lower leaves. Removing them keeps the plant healthier, as does mulching any bare earth.

Read the rest of Tomatoes |

Over on page 9

Happy

Father's



Day Richard Turcotte and Nicholas Bakewell - two of our favorite fathers who are deeply missed and loved.

Best WILLITS **POWER & HARDWARE** HONDA · HUSQVARNA · STIHL · MQ · CARHARTT Lawn & Garden Equipment Generators Sales, Parts & Service Pick-up & Delivery Sales/Parts: 707 459-6420 1600 S. Main St. Willits, CA 95490 Service: 707 459-0596 Fax: 707 459-6369

A healthy breakfast and lunch are provided FREE to children 0-18 years old, enrolled in WUSD

or not, regardless of income. Available Monday-Friday, June 9, 2025, through August 8, 2025, at Brookside Elementary School.

> Breakfast 8:00am-9:00am • Lunch 11:00am-12:30pm

Hot lunch on site or a cold meal to go

Questions? Please call the WUSD Food Director at (707)459-7700 ext.1554

Closed 6/19 and 7/4

LEGAL NOTICES

Willits Weekly can run legal notices including

fictitious business name statements. foreclosure

notices, storage

unit auctions,

and more.

Contact us for

more information

at willitsweekly@

gmail.com

tomatoes, and especially the heirloom types, need support. You can enclose them in a cage, or keep tying

couple of weeks gives

vou prime leaves all

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF SALE OF GOODS TO SATISFY SELF STORAGE FACILITY LIEN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned intends to sell the personal property described below to enforce a lien imposed on said property pursuant to Sections 21700-21716 of the Business & Professions Code, Section 2328 of UCC, Section 535 of the Penal Code and provision of the Civil Code.

The undersigned will sell at public sale by competitive bidding on the 21st day of June, 2025 at 10:30 a.m., or immediately following the GLENMARK SOUTH auction, on the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at GLENMARK NORTH 395 North Main Street, Willits, CA 95490, County of Mendocino, State of California the following:

Andrew Augustine 472 Andrew Augustine 540 Robert Beach Jubal Chilson 211 Greg Cox 329 Julia Gade 301 413 Leigha Jones 253 Matthew Krzysik 603 Benjamin Lewis 188 Greg Lohne 131 Karen Morales

The goods are described as: Tools, furniture, auto parts, camping gear, misc totes/boxes.

Purchases must be paid for at the time of purchase in cash only. All purchased items sold as is, where is, and must be removed at the time of the sale. Sale subject to cancellation in the event of settlement between owner and the obliged party

Publication Dates: June 12 and June 19, 2025

NOTICE OF SALE OF GOODS TO SATISFY SELF STORAGE FACILITY LIEN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned intends to sell the personal property described below to enforce a lien imposed on said property pursuant to Sections 21700-21716 of the Business & Professions Code, Section 2328 of UCC, Section 535 of the Penal Code and provision of the Civil Code.

The undersigned will sell at public sale by competitive bidding on the 21st day of June, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., on the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at GLENMARK SOUTH 1788 South Main Street, Willits, CA 95490, County of Mendocino, State of California the following:

Jacky Deaton F14 John Doe Mark House D04 Terry Sauve C72C

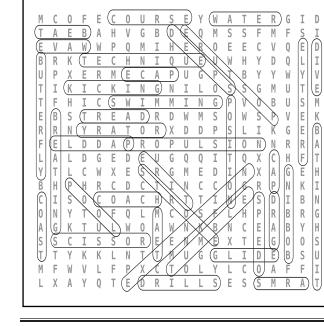
WW543

The goods are described as: Collectibles, Music Equipment, Misc Furniture

Purchases must be paid for at the time of purchase in cash only. All purchased items sold as is, where is, and must be removed at the time of the sale. Sale subject to cancellation in the event of settlement between owner and the obliged party.

Glen Green Bond-#70784656 (707) 459-4628

Publication Dates: June 12 and 19, 2025



Willits Weekly | June 19, 2025

CLASSIFIEDS FOR RENT

families

Do you need

food?

344 Railroad Avenue,

Willits, CA 95490.

Open Wednesdays &

Fridays, new expanded

distribution hours: 11 am

to 4:30 pm. New Client

Choice model where you

select your own items.

Bring shopping bags,

Bring an I.D. Info: (707)

For Rent

Clean Studio Apartment

for rent unstairs unit

close to downtown area,

Washer & Dryer facility

on hand, garbage paid.

\$800 per month & Sec.

Dep. Armco 707-354-

459-3333

Food Bank,

2 bed APT \$ 1200 1 bed SFH \$ 1250 Lincoln Realty 707-459-4599

Main Street, Willits, CA 95490 Mailing address: P.O. Box The rest of 116, Willits, CA 95490. Registered owner: Nathan Coleman, 1761 South Main

Street, Willits, CA 95490. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the

fictitious business name listed above on N/A. FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on May 29, 2025

/s/ Nathan Coleman

Fictitious Business

Name Statement

persons are doing business as

Peridot Electric, 1761 South

The following person or

2025-F0261

Publication Dates: June 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025

3 bed SFH \$ 1675 3 bed SFH \$ 1450 2 bed APT \$ 1250

Tomatoes

From page 8

You can safely remove all the leaves up to the first truss of fruit, which will be shaded by the leaves above. One final bit of pruning I like to do: A month before the first frost, I cut off the growth tips to let the plant concentrate on ripening existing fruit.

To beat sunscald in peppers, group them in a block, so that most of the light comes from above, not from the side. It helps to position them where a shadow falls for a couple of afternoon hours. And I usually grow basil, bush beans, flowers, or some other low, bushy companion between them and the sun.

Peppers are native to

riverbeds and arroyos in the Southwest, where the canvon walls give shelter and sunlight comes from **Huge Yard Sale** directly above. A bed of Huge yard sale at Golden Rule Mobile Village. peppers surrounded by .June 21st and 22nd. basil may not look like 9 am to 3 pm. Over 10 a Southwestern arroyo, homes participating. but once you know what Collectables, household conditions a plant needs, goods, tools, furniture, you can figure out how to you name it. Ridgewood Ranch, south of Willits, provide them in the garden. follow signs and balloons Jamie Chevalier lives and to the mobile village. gardens near Willits. She See map at entrance has gardened professionally for participating houses. in both Alaska and Please drive slowly in the California, as well as teaching, homesteading, and working with several national seed organizations. John Ford She started Quail Seeds in Ranch Beef 2018 as a locally focused John Ford Ranch still seed company. Her website has the 50 lb. Rancher's Choice Box for \$390.00 quailseeds.com offers and the 25 lb. Hamburger over 400 varieties of seed Box for \$170.00. Please adapted to the Northern

as

California climate.

information.

well as extensive how-to

with the IRA, Sustainable the Inflation

contact Debbie Arkelian

@ 459-5049.

Act. That put in place all kinds of rebates for things like what North Coast Energy Services does. They can come out and put in insulation in your home and other energysaving techniques. What that does is qualify you for a 30 percent credit against your tax liability. The State of California can pay up to \$8,000 for point-of-sale discounts on heat pumps.

Moore told of how she helps people with energy bill problems. "A lot of what I do has to do with people who come in with their energy bills they can't afford," said Moore. "Their power is going to get turned off. My gift is negotiating with the power companies and government agencies. With PG&E, the first thing that comes to mind is don't let your you qualify." power get turned off. There are ways to get your bill paid, work with PG&E to get the bill paid. Once your power is off. the game changes." She went on to explain some of the

Free Food for All Pop-Up

1250 Blosser Lane. In

Brown Bag Lunch Program Saturday at Mendocino Food Net-1 pm sack lunches work presents food are served by local pop-ups with free food churches, community for all: Due to the impact organizations. and of federal budget cuts, Bud at there will be only one Snider Park on East monthly popup In Wil-Commercial. . Come at lits, on 1st Thursdays, 1 pm to be assured a from 10 to 11:30 am at

> Laytonville, every 4th Thursday, 12 to 1 pm at 300 Cahto Drive. In Covelo, every 2nd Thursday, from 12 to 1 pm, at NEW ADDRESS: 24065 Rifle Road. In Leggett: Every 1st Tuesday from 12 to 1 pm at 65100 Drive-Thru Tree Road. Info: Rachelle@mendofood.org;

> > 707-615-6654.

M & M Collectors Now at Coast Hardware in Willits. A variety of M & M Collectable items ready for a new home. There are holiday decor trains, clocks, jackets and much more. Come

Office Space for

take a look.

This bright and modern 660 sq. ft. office space with a kitchenette & bathroom available for rent in the heart of Willits. Located across the street from the post office. Contact us today to schedule a viewing! 12 W Valley St Willits CA 95490. 707-459-2163.

Pearl Street Garage Sale World Famous Pearl Street Garage Sale Is Back!!! Don't miss it. Pearl Street in Willits. Saturday, June 21 from 8 am to 4 pm.

Email us your ad

Raise Your Spiritual IQ

Your Dream Worlds Revealed: Techniques to remember and interpret your inner nightly iournevs for help in daily life. You are warmly welcome to join us! Tuesday, June 24 from 2 to 3 pm, Willits Library, 390 E. Commercial St. A FREE Community Service sponsored by Eckankar in California.

Room for Rent

rent master bedroom and bath. Private entrance, no shared space, includes utilities, refrigerator, internet, AC. 1 person 50 or older. \$750 month; rental referral required. 805 259-9155.

RV/Trailer Space for Rent

Space for RV's and Trailers – starts at \$500 per month, includes water & garbage. Close to Safeway in Willits Call Tony (707) 972-4696. See at http://www. oaknvine.net/tp

Tattoo Shop Tattoo Shop in Downtown Willits! Clean, cute, and private shop with 10 years experience. Love to tattoo botanicals, cute critters, and sceneries! Appointments bookings: kikibtattoos. com

Weekend Yard

Saturday, June 21 and Sunday, June 22, from 9 am to 4 pm. 555 Mill Street, Willits. Sports Cards, Plates and other Sports Memorabilia. Also Men and Women's clothing, shoes, bags accessories, women's jewelries, kids toys, some electronics and kitchen items. exercise equipment trampoline, beach chair and more. No early birds pls...

available programs that can help pay for utilities

Bowles is a building inspector and code enforcement officer with the City of Willits and spoke on a fairly new program that provides zero-interest loans to lower income homeowners to utilize in improving their properties. The loans do not need to be paid off until the house is sold.

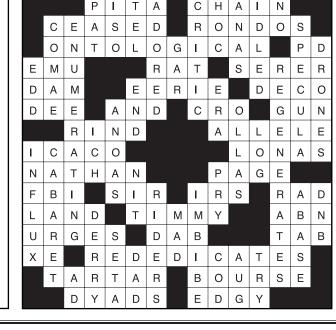
Jason Kester of North Coast Energy Services explained what his company does: "We assist people with their energy bills. In return, we ask people to weatherize their homes to bring down their energy costs. We do a lot of diagnostics, floor-to-door, and other tests and do an energy audit. We can add insulation in the attic as long as the audit allows it. Wall insulation is huge. Air sealing is a really big one, fixing all the little gaps in the ceilings and walls. We look for air leaks and fix them. Our program is totally free as long as

This is only a small percentage of the information that was available at the forum, after which people could ask questions and offer their own energy-saving suggestions.

HELP WANTED: —

Casino Controller at Sherwood Valley Casino

The Casino Controller directs the cashiering, vault, drop and count areas in a manner that safeguards the assets of the Sherwood Valley Casino, while establishing and maintaining acceptable accounting procedures and internal controls and assures all external and internal regulations are met. Has direct supervision of Cage/Vault, Drop, and Count Supervisors. Exercises management responsibility for all activities of the Accounting/Finance Department. Activities include direct hands-on oversight of audit, accounting, general ledger, reporting, payroll, purchasing, cashiering, and count room operations. Responsible for the company's overall operating and capital budgets, internal control policies, insurance and risk management programs, and relationships with financial institutions, casino's compliance with provisions of the State Compact, NIGC, Tribal ordinances, Gaming Commission regulations, cash transactions reporting, and IRS withholding and reporting requirements. Contact the General Manager at mfitzgerral@svrcasino.com





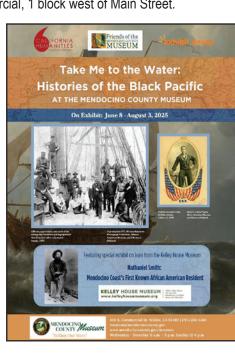
Grange Pancake Breakfast, June 22 Submitted by Little Lake Grange

Join us at the Grange Breakfast, on Sunday, June 22, from 8 to 11 am. \$12 buys you a plate of the best "scratch" pancakes and local farm eggs to be found anywhere around.

Our tasty breakfast is a wonderful combination of comfort foods. All you can eat pancakes – choose our

Sourdough Wholegrain, Hank's Famous Buttermilk Pancakes, or Gluten-free – Beeler's Quality Bacon, Organic Local Farm Fresh Scrambled Eggs, Real Butter, Juice, Organic Coffee or Tea. All for only \$12; \$11 for seniors; and 5 for children under 10. We also can serve you extra sides of Organic Fruit \$2-\$3; Amish Organic Maple Syrup \$1; Fresh-Made Fruit syrup \$1; extra Beeler's Bacon \$2. Breakfast is at the Little Lake Grange #670, 291 School Street - two blocks south of Commercial, 1 block west of Main Street.









At top: Ann Maglinte's "Watercolor for Older Adults" class gathers for a photo: back row, Josephine, Kris, Lil, Janet, Lynn, Scott, Connie and Kay; front row, Julie, Ron, Stacey, Kary, Ann, Ken, Margaret, Andy and Maria. Below, left: Kary smiles next to a display of her many watercolor paintings. Below, right: Stacey shows off her animal watercolor paintings. At bottom, left: A bear painting by Lil. At bottom, right: A collection of Georgia O'Keeffe inspired paintings by Kary.





Watercolors with Ann Maglinte

Submitted by Ann Maglinte

We had a great semester in my spring "Watercolor for Older Adults" class offered by Mendocino College. The first half of the semester was spent on animals: cats, dogs, bears and more. We studied how to paint eves and fur in watercolor, and pen and ink. It is said "the eyes are the key to the animal's soul," and carefully painted eyes really make an animal portrait come alive. The fur should show texture: coarse, soft, shiny, curly. Taking the time to get to know your subjects with sketches and observation makes all the difference in a painting.

The last half of the semester we painted exotic and local flowers, and worked with different backgrounds. We were inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe, and her large flower paintings. We painted the flowers of Hawaii: hibiscus, bird of paradise, plumeria, and much more. Several students were inspired by the beautiful rhododendrons that our area is famous for. My goal is to be able to share with my students the skills they need to paint the beauty around them with confidence. We create a "watercolor community" in our class, where we all feel welcomed and inspired.

ART-522-0524 Onsite watercolor class, Monday and Wednesday, 2 to 5 pm in the

ART-522--0367 Online watercolor class, Tuesday Zoom Meeting, 2:30 to 4:30 pm

Call the college at 459-6224 for more information.







The rest of Budget

worker for the firehouse. This position will be

filled by a participant in Willits High School's

WorkAbility program. The WorkAbility program

is funded by the California Department of

Education to help students find part-time

work while still attending school. Little Lake

is one of many businesses in the city that

participate in the WorkAbility program and acts

as a mentorship opportunity for the student

Staff and board members discussed

potential changes to burn permit fees and

regulations. At this time, it is unclear whether

burn permit fees will increase next year or if all

county residents will be required to seek burn

permits through Mendocino Air Quality Control.

performed for Air Quality Control by the Matrix

Group determined that "The District has a

current fee-related deficit of roughly \$501,000,

or recovers 42% of its costs. The 42% cost

recovery is on the lower end, as most Air

Districts are between 35–80% cost recovery."

Regarding burn permits, there is concern

that if the permitting fee increases too much,

people may choose to burn illegally or not burn

at all, which would increase fuel loads and the

risk of fires year after year. Currently, no fee

increases have been approved. A burn permit

through Air Quality Control is still \$19 and is

Burn permits from Little Lake Fire are free

for City of Willits residents. Burn piles in

the city are also restricted to 4x4 feet. As a

reminder, city burning hours are from 6 am to

12 noon. Before burning, please call 707-463-

4391 to verify that it is a burn day. Burn barrels

are illegal in California. Abate a 10-foot area

around your burn pile and have a shovel and

Lastly, department staff and the board

discussed the ongoing issue Little Lake faces

in trying to complete state-mandated fire safety

inspections for all apartment complexes within

Willits. If you live in an apartment complex in

town - or know someone who does - Little

Lake Fire has sent letters to the owners of these buildings seeking permission to complete fire

inspections. These inspections are necessary

Little Lake Fire Engineer and Training Officer

Captain Harry So wants to remind residents:

"We DO NOT go into apartments. The

inspections are for the exterior only. We look

for fire extinguishers, proper addresses, and

electrical and gas meter labeling. Permission

from owners or managers is needed, and very

few have contacted us out of the 32 letters we

Protest

limited to a 4x4 vegetation burn.

hose available at the burn site.

for the safety of the residents.

A 2024 Cost Recovery and Fee Analysis

assigned to work at the firehouse.

From page 1

the district towards finding a From page financial solution." The CSEA requests that the district explore other areas in the budget to help absorb costs so that CSEA and WTA employees don't bear the brunt of it all.

The WTA also wanted to stress the importance of the board's decision-making. Bowles thanks the board for the time it spent finding the next WUSD superintendent and "really appreciates that we had representation from all aspects of our district and outlying areas." However, he wanted to hammer the board on a few things: enforcing boundaries and absenteeism, articulation, and stability.

Bowles acknowledged that not one person has all the answers. Still, he said it would "strongly behoove the board and our incoming superintendent to look at places where we spend money" and think carefully about the decisions being made. In closing, Bowles graciously thanked all and expressed interest in "working with the next superintendent and the board in the future."

Following these remarks, the board positively reflected on the end of the school year. President Jeanna King positively commented. "I wish to thank all staff, students, and families – and have an enjoyable, relaxing summer." New Board Trustees April Lamprich and David Lilker reflected on the learning experience of their first year as WUSD board members. Board Trustee Paula Nunez reassured the audience, expressing, "I'd like to make it very well understood that your sincere interest in the decisions of the district is truly appreciated, even though it doesn't always look that way."

Public comment echoed Nunez's statement in a negative light. The first speaker was Donna Cash Vargas, a mother who read a statement on her daughter's experience at Willits High School. The experience was extremely negative, highlighting ways the district lacks in supporting its students, students with accommodations, and handling student situations.

The second speaker, WUSD Custodian Daniel Stans, claimed to "have witnessed multiple occasions on which shady deals or excuses being made for long time employees when they do things that are completely unacceptable." Stans expressed that his trust with the district has been broken and how decisions from the board undermines his trust. This comment from Stans said the board's decision "to not grant an interview to Brian Bowles further erodes that trust. I feel like if the board is really after the benefit of the kids, they would interview all possible candidates." The board had no further comments after either

However, the board also held a public hearing on the district's 2025-2026 school year budget. This year's planning factors include the costof-living allowance, enrollment, funding method from the prior year, and average daily attendance funding. Unknowns within the budget are Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten enrollment, the actual COLA funding, which has not yet been finalized for the year, and ADA. Currently, the projections are erring on the side of caution due to

dropping enrollment and unknown funding.

The summary from the district states: "The budget and multi-year projection are only able to meet the 3% Reserve requirement with the movement of eligible expenditures to restricted funding sources. This ultimately allows the district additional planning time to make decisions that will decrease expenditures in order to stabilize the budget and ensure fiscal stability moving forward."

Due to the continued uncertainty at the state and federal levels, the budget is vulnerable to adverse impacts if projected funding decreases. This informational presentation started multiple discussions, causing an audience member to chime in, saying, "I would love for the board to be more educated on the decision that [they're] making," and with that statement, the board called for the meeting to be closed.

Operator

From page 1

awareness that we need to have these attacks on our constitutional public hearing was quickly closed as there were no rights and our democracy quelled.'

From page 6

Willits Indivisible was formed to gather like-minded progressives who can no longer sit quietly while democracy is dismantled, piece by piece. They see the rights of the people being stripped away and the demonization of certain classes of people, namely immigrants who have come to the country to find a better life and protect their families from the horrors of other parts of the world.

Although 600+ people in one small town will most likely not make a difference, multiplying their efforts by the over 2,000 cities in which similar simultaneous demonstrations were taking place, involving an estimated five million people, demonstrating peacefully, they will be heard, and that was the point. People in other countries participated as by the association, and Alaniz will be attending the well. The organizers from Willits Indivisible did an excellent job of making sure every participant was safe and that all ran smoothly, with about 15 monitors helping at crosswalks and driveways.

"This parade helps because just like in South Korea, when their leaders try to impose martial law, and the people stood up in mass, and went out and got the attention of the politicians," said Dayle Akridge Deer, expressing his priorities. "This helps because we're standing out, saying, 'this isn't okay. This isn't who we are.' I think, with the vast number of people taking part in the No Kings demonstrations that the people in Washington will have to take notice.

"Some of the people who have been kidnapped by ICE have been returned because of people standing up and saying, 'we want them back," Akridge Deer said. "Even if this doesn't have any effect on the so-called president, then maybe members of congress might consider wanting to be re-elected. It's going to be an interesting midterm."

Melinda Clarke addressed the crowd at Babcock Park, prior to the participants moving en masse down the sidewalk. "The people who came before us just wanted a chance for a better life in a country that calls itself a democracy. That's why we're here today. We're hanging on to democracy for dear life. This is why we stand. This is why we vigil. This is this year's Brooktrails budget is "Building Customer why we walk. We are outraged by ICE's treatment of our neighbors. We Confidence through Sound Financial Planning". are outraged by Trump's escalation of his war on brown people.

"We are here to be present," said Clarke. "We'll take a moment of silence to honor our ancestors, our neighbors. We talk to each other. We listen to each other. We are for social programs that benefit us and the rest of the world. We are horrified by the USAID cuts. We want due process. We want to abolish persecution. We love our Constitution. We love our Bill of Rights. We stand for free speech and access to voting. We want clean air, and we understand the direness of the planet right now. We are non-violent. Our power comes from non-violence. We are not of one cloth, but we do have common threads.

An excellent video of the event, by Larry Silverman, can be seen at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUfi8uXNems

The next meeting of Willits Indivisible is planned for today, July 19, at 5:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange. Bring canned goods to support the Food Bank. Visit their Facebook page for more info.

"You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result." - Mahatma Gandhi.

comments offered.

General Manager Tamara Alaniz reported that she had received word on June 9 from the Water Reuse Association regarding an abstract that the district office and Carollo Engineering, Inc. had submitted, in order to participate in a panel discussion at the upcoming Water Reuse California Annual Conference regarding the topic, "Pure Water for All? (The Costs and Challenges of a Water Reuse Project in the Redwoods)."

The abstract that was submitted was selected conference to do the panel discussion. The meeting will take place in San Diego on September 22.

Alaniz stated, "Ideally, the opportunity to get our story out there to the Water Reuse Association and cohorts there, as well as to the legislative and administrative individuals who participate in the conference and those who approve grant awards for projects like these could hear this, and that can benefit the district."

Alaniz also said, "The Firco Road clearance is continuing and we're working on a possible alternative to the route that we could use in the event of a wildfire" before the clearance is completed.

Next up was "Review and Approval of the Accounts Payable Report" in the amount of \$91,396.19, and the board voted unanimously to approve the report.

The board then focused on "Resolution 2025-26 Adopting the Financial Plan for Services (The Budget)." It was noted that the primary theme for

"Over the last seven years the board and staff have continued to improve the District's financial condition and improved the services provided to its customers by: 1) adequately funding all departments' expenses; 2) budgeting savings and reinvesting reserves which now exceed \$1,000,000. with additional investment returns expected again this fiscal year; 3) cash-funding six major water and sewer infrastructure projects, without incurring long-term debt for future ratepayers; 4) modernizing office and field processes to increase efficiency and effectiveness; 5) maintaining debt service responsibilities, including saving the ratepayers a million dollars on the life of a refinance water bond, and working with the City of Willits to expense the last two years of wastewater debt service and capital replacement costs; 6) purchasing a new office building for administration, which will be

County's Planning and Building Department, this report is for you. The 2024-25 Mendocino County Grand Jury report entitled: "Planning and Building Department Structural Issues: Exposing the Cracks" digs into complaints from residents, and what Grand Jurors found is troubling. The full report lays it out in detail. If you've ever wondered

Grand Jury Report: Planning and

Building Department: Structural

Issues: Exposing the Cracks

June 11 - If you've ever had to deal with Mendocino

Submitted by Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury

why your neighbor got a permit in a week while you waited months, you might just find some answers. Read the full report at: https://mendocinocounty.org/government/grand-

Here is the Report Summary:

The Mendocino County Planning and Building Services has faced significant challenges trying to regulate nonstandard and unpermitted construction since the 1970s.

In the State of California, the construction industry is governed by a comprehensive set of regulations known as the California Building Code. These codes are designed to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the public by regulating the design, construction and maintenance of buildings within the State. This is the job of PBS in each

The 2024-25 Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury received a complaint regarding a misuse of the Class K permitting process at PBS. This complaint contained evidence of a lack of communication between divisions within PBS, misuse of discretion, failure to perform onsite inspections, overlooked code violations, dumping of trash on Jackson State Forest property, permitting commercial structures as Class K, ignoring toxic waste in Class K structures, finalizing permits prior to compliance with CAL FIRE Public Resource Code § 4290 fire safe regulations, and other violations.

An onsite visit by Grand Jury members confirmed these findings. Three additional, separate complaints, all similar in nature, were received during the Grand Jury year, further exposing the severity of the problems that exist within Mendocino County PBS

These complaints contained evidence of a lack of organized structure and communication between and within departments, divisions and staff. These inconsistencies in the interpretation and application of State law and County ordinances give the perception of favoritism and double

In 2017, Mendocino County was ravaged by the massive Redwood Complex wildfire, burning 36,523 acres, destroying 543 structures, damaging 41 other structures, and taking the lives of nine people. By neglecting the requirements of PRC § 4290 rather than enforcing it, the PBS is setting the stage for another catastrophic life safety event that could be at least as devastating and costly, if not more, as the Redwood Complex wildfire.

Public safety must be the number one priority for the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors. Clear and concise directions need to be given to Planning and Building Services to adhere to State law and County ordinances.

Response Services Assessment."

occupied this year; 7) continuing to upgrade the Brooktrails Community Center; and, 8) successfully passing and receiving funding from the Brooktrails Fire Department Fire Protection and Emergency

Additionally, the report continued, "the Board and employees came to a three-year employment agreement last year that provides personnel the focus in achieving department missions through executing Board priorities. Providing the core services of the District requires significant staff time and attention to ensure that customer needs are

"The Financial Plan for Services shows that the District will provide good public services in a transparent and equitable manner throughout the budget year.

The District's total revenues for Water, Sewer, Fire, Parks and Recreation and Administration totals: \$4,157.924. The total expenses amount to \$4,205,597. Copies of all documents or information on District operations, finances or services, may be obtained by contacting the District office at 707-459-2494 or come by in person to the District office, 24860 Birch Street, in Brooktrails.

Finally, the Board focused attention on "Consideration of Golf Course Operations

The present operator/manager, Marcus Newby, and partner Jaclyn Christian, notified the District on May 27 that they would like to end their management role by December 31, 2025. Therefore, it was up to the Board to decide whether to circulate a request for proposals to solicit a new golf course operator or to bring operations of the golf course in-house under full District management.

There was considerable back and forth during which the two management options, District management versus hiring a new operator/ manager, were discussed. Director Ed Horrick ended by making the motion to circulate a request for proposals to solicit a new golf course operator.

Christian, current operator with husband, Marcus, stepped to the podium and stated that, "I would be happy to sit with you all and discuss this further. If there is someone of interest who wants to move forward, and they have shown that they are passionate about it and that they are able to show that they know what they are doing, that that would be a big part of what you consider in filling

Pg. 11



The rest of Burn

From page 1

PBA, said the Covelo Volunteer Fire Department and CAL FIRE identified the airport as an ideal place for a burn due to frequent vehicle fires that break out near the facility's abundant crop of tall grass every year. By purposely burning the fuels before the hot, dry season advances, the agencies hope that any unexpected fires will be easy to douse before they spread widely.

"The other advantage of this," Hall added, "is that by creating a black area, if we get something like the August Complex again, we have a place to evacuate to." With the rodeo grounds, the recreation center, and the school nearby, the airstrip could serve as an ideal gathering point for humans and animals alike.

"It's kind of a logical safe space," she reasoned. Fire, she added, is welcome in the community. The airport is a historical location for deliberate burns in Covelo. Hall recalled that, up until the early 2000s, when it no longer had a burn boss on staff, the local fire department burned the area every year. Inaugurating the new PBA in this location, she declared, is "bringing it back around."

The kickoff burn was a large regional gathering. About 70 people from a wide variety of firefighting and nonprofit agencies converged from around the county, as well as Calistoga, Kettenpom, Klamath, and Hawkins Bar, among others. Everyone wore yellow turnouts, heavy boots, and hard hats as they fanned out around the perimeter of the airstrip.

For its first burn, the Round Valley PBA worked with Torchbearr, a non-profit organization led by retired US Forest Service burn bosses that lends its expertise to smaller entities. Terry Warlick, a former firefighting Battalion Chief in Covelo, also retired from the Forest Service and went to work with his old colleague Scot Steinbring, who co-founded Torchbearr and is the Director of Operations. "After I retired, I was ready to play in this PBA private arena to kind of share my knowledge," Warlick explained. "That's how we do it."

There was a certain amount of waiting before the main event got going. Then there was some more waiting, as weather monitors reported on the temperature, humidity, and wind conditions. Every fire has a different prescription, or set of conditions under which it's safe to start burning. On this particular day, no one could light a drip torch until it was below 80 degrees, with a wind speed under 10 miles an hour. May 30 provided a foretaste of summer, with dry heat lingering at 94 degrees until well after 6 pm.

"It's patience," said Steinbring. "There is no hurry in prescribed fire. There have been many times where our burn bosses have said, you know, it's just not a good day. And that's where we need to empower our folks to see what a good day is, and what a bad day is, so we set them up for success in the future."

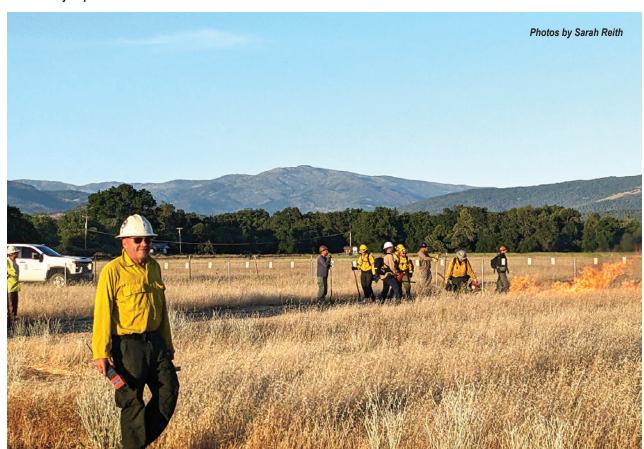
Everyone in the state knows by now that a bad day is when a wildfire gets out of control and tears through a community. In 2020-2021, the Slater Fire burned over 200 homes in Happy Camp, a small community in the Klamath National Forest in Siskiyou County. Steinbring worked as a Fire Management Officer for the Karuk tribe, which was hit hard by the Slater Fire, before he decided to offer his expertise in prescribed burns to communities across the region. Most of his staff is in California, but he's traveled to a number of other states, as well.

Jewelina Acosta, who met Steinbring when they were both working for the Karuk tribe, got involved with





At left: Crew member starts the May 30 prescribed burn at the Round Valley Airport. Above, left: A view of the smoky sunset at the Round Valley Prescribed Burn Association's May 30 burn. Above, right: A careful line of fire burns by the airport's runway. Below: Torchbearr's Director of Operations Scot Steinbring, who's been working in fire for 30 years, smiles during the prescribed burn at the Round Valley Airport.



prescribed fire for the ecological benefits. "When it comes to our native plants and resources, fire really helps with keeping away insects and disease," she said.

She didn't grow up with large-scale prescribed burns, but recalled that when she was younger, her grandmother used fire to help cultivate willow plants, which are used in traditional basket weaving. She's expecting prescribed fire to play a big role in her future, too. "I didn't really think about doing fire or anything until I worked with the Karuk tribe, but now it is something that I'm looking forward to doing, pretty much permanently," Acosta reflected.

Riley Dizon has been working for Torchbearr for about a month, and says some of his family members in San Diego were initially a little worried about his career path. "When I started this whole fire thing, they got all mad at me, like, you better not be starting no fires," he reported. "They still have a wary mindset, but I think as I tell them more about it, they're getting more and more comfortable with it.

"I think it's more about having the knowledge of what prescribed burning does, how it reduces wildfire risk. Wildfires are way more dangerous. There's no resources on hand for whenever a wildfire happens, it just pops up out of nowhere. [With] controlled burns, we have resources in place, we pick the day, we do everything we can to make sure it's the perfect situation to burn and get rid of the fuels, so if a fire does start there, it will go nowhere."

The fire at the airport finally started at about 7:45. One crew lit a test burn along the fence line as the shadows of the mountains stretched across the grass. Ribbons of flame leapt through the fuel, merged, then subsided into crackling smoke.

Emily Lord, a GrizzlyCorps fellow who is working with the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council, described how the flames were being deployed, less than 15 minutes after the first spark. The fire was already about the length of a football field, and crew leads were calling in reports from their positions on walkie-talkies.

Crews toting drip torches full of gasoline and diesel were lighting the grass on the north and south ends of the airport. The north edge of the fire was pointing straight into the wind, like a boat tacking sideways. The crews created strips of fire, and controlled its behavior by moderating the distance between the strips.

"Depending on the spacing between the strips, we'll see more extreme fire behavior if the strips are further apart.

So if they want to keep it really controlled," Lord explained, "they'll put the strips close together. And because the wind is pushing the fire into the strip before it, the part of the fire that's going to be the biggest and the fastest, going with the wind, is called head fire." The crews made sure they kept the head fire off the road, and let the wind chase it across the grass within the area that had been designated as the burn site.

The sun went down fast, casting a pastel pinkish light over the smoke. As the last of the flames lit up the night, 8-year-old Asuxiim, also known as Sugar, cruised the perimeter in an ATV with Torchbearr 's Warlick. She had traveled to Covelo from Trinity County with Steinbring and her mother, and spent much of the day riding her scooter around the rec center

Sugar has been to a few burns, and has even lent a hand with a torch. She was prepared to indulge questions about fire, but didn't seem to find it at all extraordinary. She thought the fire in the airport was "really fun, but when it gets too smoky, I have to hold my breath for a bit." She added that she likes to light fires, "but not wildfires, because those are dangerous. These are safe fires, so I don't freak out."

She recalls the first time she helped to light a fire: "It was up a little mountain, and there was a lot of grass. Scot, who I call Big Mac, gave me a drip torch and just told me to drip it, and then it would start a fire." She stood waiting for the next question. Then she noticed that the moon shining through the smoke looked like the letter C, and that a friendly horse in the pasture across the road had two colors in its tail.

The fire subsided. It was time for a late dinner. The people of Round Valley had made a refuge from fire, on a patch of blackened ground.



A celebration of life for Judi Montalvo will be held at The Munchery Restaurant on Sunday, June 29 from noon until 4 pm. Please RSVP. Contact Jim Montalvo by phone during the day at 707-459-3039 and in the evening at 707-459-0551.



