

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print

Willits Weekly newspaper

It's Real Estate Section Thursday!

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 609 Thursday, September 11, 2025

CA firefighters join with UC researchers to study cancer risk

Submitted by CAL FIRE Sacramento

September 9 – The Governor's Office made the announcement Tuesday of a major new research effort led by the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and Davis (UC Davis), in collaboration with CAL FIRE, that is investigating how occupational exposures may increase cancer risk among California firefighters.

The project, a sub-study of the California Firefighter Cancer Research, is backed by nearly \$9.7 million in funding from CAL FIRE and will include 3,500 firefighters from departments across the state over a two-year period.

The research team is guided by a firefighter advisory board to ensure the study remains grounded in real-world needs and priorities.

"This research underscores CAL FIRE's commitment to protecting firefighter health through science, innovation, and partnership," says CAL FIRE Director, Chief Joe Tyler.

Read the rest of **Firefighters** Over on Page 4

MCSO arrests 2 Clearlake men after Covelo traffic stop

By Sergeant Jack Woida for MCSO

On September 5, 2025 at approximately 8:40 pm, a deputy with the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was working patrol in the Covelo area when he observed a vehicle driving on Highway 162 with an inoperable headlight. The deputy initiated a traffic enforcement stop in the 76000 block of Highway 162 in Covelo.

Upon contacting the occupants of the vehicle, the deputy noted Fernando Solorio, 30-year-old from Clearlake, CA, was the driver and Cornelio Solorio, 24-year-old from Clearlake, CA, was seated in the front passenger seat. The deputy also observed an open container of alcohol within the passenger compartment of the vehicle.

A records check revealed Fernando Solorio's driver's license was suspended and he was on DMV probation. Both occupants ultimately exited the vehicle, and deputies located an unloaded handgun and a loaded rifle within the passenger compartment of the vehicle. Both firearms

Read the rest of **Arrests** Over on Page 4



Above, from left: Jeff's Gas Appliances stocks washers and gas dryers in their showroom. Also available at the showroom are propane-powered 18-cubic-foot freezers that use around 2.5 gallons of propane per week. The showroom has a selection of new gas ranges for in-town or off-grid use. Below: Jason Whitby repairs gas and electric appliances in Willits and the surrounding area.



Below: Jeff's Gas Appliance's main repairman, Jason Whitby, left, talks with mom, Terry, and canine mascot Athena, in the showroom.



Gas & Electric

Jeff's Gas Appliances now also offers sales and service on most electric appliances, too

It's been over 35 years, new services have been added, and a baton has recently been passed, and Jeff's Gas Appliances continues to offer appliance repair, sales and service in the Willits community.

"Jeff Whitby is stepping back after having shared his knowledge of the gas appliances with his son Jason Whitby for the past 20 years," explained Terry Whitby. "Jason is taking over the repairs and sales, and we are expanding into repairing most electric appliances, as well as gas – natural and propane. If your appliances are giving you trouble, give us a call!"

Mobile and in-shop repairs are offered at their Willits shop, and the showroom also displays a variety of new, used, and reconditioned appliances available for sale, including washers, dryers, gas refrigerators, water heaters, and more.

"This is a good time to think about the heaters you will need this winter, and have them serviced if you haven't had that done for a while," continued Terry, who is in the office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 am to 4 pm to help get you scheduled. Stop by the shop located at 549 Central Avenue, or call 707-459-5223 for more information.

– Maureen Jennison

Get your Lions Club Drive-Thru Chicken Dinner delivered

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Talk about an easy way to support our Willits Senior Center, which provides so many vital services to area seniors, not to mention pancake breakfasts, fellowship, the Thrift Shop, bingo, and lunch. On Friday, September 19, take the night off from cooking, and enjoy the famous Willits Lions Club Drive-Thru BBQ Chicken Dinner for 2 instead, as a fundraiser for the senior center.

You can even get the delicious dinner for 2 delivered, for a \$5 delivery fee.

Members of the Willits Lions Club donate the food, their time, and their well-experienced BBQ skills to prepare the bagged dinner for 2, which includes 1/2 Barbecued Chicken cooked over oak wood; Cole Slaw; Calico Beans; Rolls; and Ghirardelli Brownies. Meals can be picked up between 5 to 6:30 pm at the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Tickets must be Read the rest of **Chicken** Over on Page 4

September update from WUSD Superintendent Baker

By WUSD Superintendent John A. Baker

As Superintendent of Willits Unified School District, I am proud to share that we have had a wonderful start to the 2025–26 school year. The first days of school are always filled with excitement, energy, and possibility, and this year has been no exception. Our classrooms are alive with learning, our students are reconnecting with friends, and our staff is working hard to create a positive, supportive environment for every child.

One of the district's highest priorities is, and always will be, the safety of our students and staff. Over the summer, we made a significant investment in enhancing campus security by installing new safety cameras across our schools. This project was funded through bond dollars, "well spent tax payers money," allowing us to wisely and responsibly use community-supported resources to strengthen the safety of our school so our students can be "safe." These cameras provide an added layer of protection, ensuring that

Read the rest of **Baker** Over on Page 11


County Fair

101st annual Mendocino County Fair and Apple Show this weekend

It's mid-September and that means it's also time for the annual Mendocino County Fair and Apple Show.

This year, festivities will run from Friday, September 12 through Sunday, September 14 at the Boonville Fairgrounds and include all the favorites including building displays and exhibit entries; junior and senior livestock shows; live concerts; carnival rides, food and games; a soccer game; CCPRA rodeo; a parade; classic car show; sheep dog trials; apple and wine tasting; the annual Wool and Fiber Festival and much more.

A full schedule of events and additional information is available on the fair's website: <https://mendocountyfair.com/>



101st Annual
MENDOCINO COUNTY FAIR & APPLE SHOW

DATES: Friday, September 12 through Sunday, September 14, 2025

LOCATION: Fairgrounds, Boonville, Anderson Valley, Mendocino County, California

HOURS: 9 am to Midnight Daily!

ADMISSION: ★ Adults - \$12 ★ Juniors 13 -18 - \$10 ★ Children 7 -12 - \$8 ★ 6 & under - Free
Admission tickets available online at mendocountyfair.com

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS:
★ Friday - Seniors - 65 and over \$6 - ALL DAY! ★ Friday - Children 12 and under - FREE!
★ Three Day Pass for Seniors - 65 & over - \$25 (Purchase Pre-Fair)

CARNIVAL: ★ Daily! Pay-One-Price for Unlimited Rides - Valid all day – \$35 Pre-Sale (before Fair opens) - \$45 if purchased during Fair -- Pre-Sale available at the Fair Office, Lemon's Market in Philo, A.V. Elementary School & online at mendocountyfair.com

SPECIAL EVENTS: HORSE SHOW – 4-H, FFA & Open – Friday, beginning at 8 am – Rodeo Arena
★ SOCCER GAME – Friday, 5 PM – Rodeo Arena

C.C.P.R.A. RODEOS ★ Saturday night - 8 pm ★ Sunday afternoon - 2 pm

DANCE - Saturday ★ 9:30 pm to Midnight in the Rodeo Arena featuring Dean Titus & The Coyote Cowboys
★ Free with Fair Admission!

SHEEP DOG TRIALS FINALS - Sunday - 10 am - Rodeo Arena
CLASSIC CAR SHOW JUDGING - Sunday - 10 am - Rodeo Parking Lot
PARADE - Sunday at Noon - Highway 128 to Rodeo Arena

DANCE - Sunday ★ 6 pm to 9:00 pm in the Rodeo Arena featuring Vales Del Rancho & Herenchue Reyes
★ Free with Fair Admission!

ENTERTAINMENT: All Free with Fair Admission - Continuous Family Entertainment, including –
Godfrey the Magician – Multiple Shows Daily – Lawn Stage
Scott Forbes – Multiple Shows Daily – Lawn Stage

★ Robin Lara - Strolling Act ★ Bri Crabtree's Silly Circus Show ★ Cutest Show on Earth
★ Pony Land Petting Zoo, 10 am to 6 pm ★ Freaky Fruit Contest - Sunday

APPLE TASTING: Daily! Sample some of Anderson Valley's Finest Varieties!

WINE TASTING: Daily! Sample some of Mendocino County's award winning vintages!

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS: 27TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA WOOL & FIBER FESTIVAL
98TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA NATIONAL WOOL SHOW

★ Livestock Shows ★ Floral and Garden Displays ★ Feature Booths
★ Apple Displays ★ Arts and Crafts ★ Pony Rides
★ Parade of Champions & Announcement of Apple Jack Contest Winners – Saturday, 7 pm
★ Shearing & Skirting Demo – Saturday ★ Spinning Contest – Sunday

PARKING: \$8 **PLEASE:** No Pets **WEBSITE:** www.mendocountyfair.com

DIRECTIONS: Take Highway 101 to Highway 128 West to Boonville

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 458 - Boonville, CA 95415

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL: 707.895.3011 **EMAIL:** mcofair@pacific.net

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
Adult Sunday School 8:30 a.m.
Info? 707-459-1905
www.agapebiblechurch.com

Amazing Grace Assembly of God Church
803 Coast Street
P.O. Box 489, Willits
Worship Service - 5:00 p.m.
Pastor Kris Strickland
EVERYBODY 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
Sunday Bible Study-10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship-11:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service-6-7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study-7-8:00 p.m.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
265 Margie Drive
Willits, CA 95490
ALL ARE WELCOME
Sacrament Meeting
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Eckankar: The Path of Spiritual Freedom
•A University for Soul
•Spiritual Living Courses
•Spiritual Discussions
•ECK 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:
Wednesday-Friday 9:00 a.m.
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
https://santhonywillits.org/
sainthanthonwillits@gmail.com
We welcome All Walks of Faith

St. Francis Episcopal Church
1 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 Lutheran Church
Sunday Service
10:00 a.m.
(707) 459-2988
24 Mill Creek Drive
Facebook.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
Labyrinth and Peace Garden
A place to find comfort where all are welcome
Pastor Jaime Rogers-Fairchild
Sunday Worship at 10:30 am
286 School St. (at Pine)
707-459-2855
wumc@outlook.com
www.willitsumc.org
Facebook: facebook/willits umc

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



Thursday, September 11

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors on Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 pm at City Park with vendors along State Street for the freshest produce available, local meat, farm fresh eggs, hot and cold food, and tasty treats from local businesses, along with crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits to double your dollars.

Bit and a Bite at the Museum: Join us for light refreshments, history and conversation Thursday, September 11 from 12:30 to 1:30. Museum staff member Mary Pappadakis will recommend her favorite local history books. Mendocino County Museum, 400 East Commercial Street.

NCBE and Willits Frontier Days Mixer September: A celebration sponsored by the Northcoast Builders Exchange to highlight the NBCC Bootcamp Project, showcase our students, and recognize sponsors and volunteers. This free event is on September 11, from 5 to 7 pm at the Willits Frontier Days Rodeo Grounds, 423 East Commercial Street.

Friday, September 12

True West Opens at WCT: This darkly funny drama written by Sam Shepard and directed by Joshua Sternberg opens at Willits Community Theatre on Friday, September 12 for a three-week run with performances on Friday and Saturdays at 7 pm and Sundays at 2 pm. Tickets are \$20, available at the door or online: wctperformingartscenter.org.

Monthly Art Talk at WCA: Dr. Julie Alderson presents 'Art of the West,' an examination of how artists have shaped and reflected the mythology of the Western frontier. Friday, September 12 at 6:30 pm at the Willits Center for the Arts.

Storytime with Ms. McCarthy at the Library: Stories enhanced with songs and a puppet play by local storyteller Ms. McCarthy. These stories are for preschool age children, along with their caregivers. September 12, from 11 am to noon in the Children's Library. More info: 707-459-5908.

Kristen Ford at Shanachie: With her latest album, 'Pinto,' this L.A. songwriter blasts way beyond the point of caution and unveils a wild landscape of visceral emotion. Friday, September 12 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub.



Willits Photography Club at WCA: Open to all skill levels and meets the 2nd Saturday of the month with this month's meeting on Saturday, September 13 from 10 am to noon in the classroom at Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. (Please use back door).

Frankie and the Lost Souls at Shanachie: An indie folk-rock band bringing a nostalgia for a 90s and early 00s pop-rock soundscape. Saturday, September 13 at 8 pm, Shanachie Pub.

Sunday, September 14

Brunch, Sip and Paint at WCA: Come have brunch and paint leaf watercolors with Sandy Strong, Sunday, September 14 from 1 to 4 pm. Fee is \$75 and buys materials, brunch and a seasonal alcoholic or nonalcoholic beverage. Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street.

Free Zumba Demo at Rec Grove Park: Learn how to Zumba at this free demonstration by Flourish and Flow, Sunday, September 14 from 11 am to 12:30 pm at Rec Grove Park, South Lenore Avenue.

True West at WCT: Matinee showing of True West, Sunday, September 14 at 2 pm at the Willits Community Theatre. More info see Sept 12 listing.

Tuesday, September 16

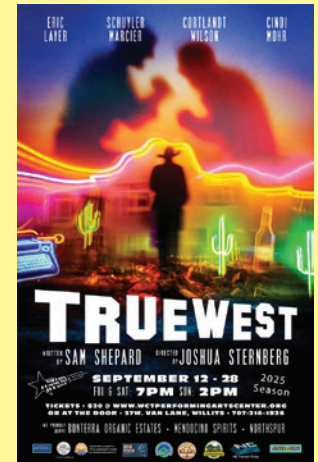
Rhythm & Flow for Youth at WCA: This seven-week session for youths aged 8 to 14 focuses on finding the beat, playful cardio, flexibility, balance, strength and mobility in an uplifting environment. Starting September 16 and continuing every Tuesday from 4 to 5:30 pm through October 28 in the Upstairs Studio at Willits Center for the Arts. \$15 per class or \$84 for the entire session. Register by emailing: mvmntmedicin@gmail.com.



Nor-Cal Shred Fest at Laytonville Skateboard Park: An all-ages hard rock music and skateboarding extravaganza to benefit the Laytonville Skateboard Park. Enjoy six live bands, a skateboarding contest, local food vendors, beer & wine garden and free camping. Saturday, September 13 from 1 to 10 pm at Laytonville Skate Park, 351 Harwood Road, Laytonville. More info: 707-984-8089.



Inner Earth Tea and The Muse Block Party: A community celebration of the healing arts featuring apiary and herbal products, tea and chair massages, along with music, a raffle, activities for the kids and participation in the Rec Grove Mural Project. Saturday, September 13 from noon to 4 pm, 30 East San Francisco Avenue.



The Celebration of Life Trail Trek September 27

This 4th annual community trail running and walking event offers a 5K-ish trail run/walk, a Trail Half Marathon, and Par Course loops on single- and double-track trails through the Brooktrails area, with the aim of providing a family-friendly experience in the scenic local environment. Event begins at 9 am and attendees may same-day register at the Brooktrails Par Course starting at 8 am or preregister online at runsignup.com. For more info call Crystal: 916-764-1746.

Mabon Market at The Munchery September 27

Join us on Saturday, September 27 from 1 to 5 pm for a magical afternoon of live music by Lindsay Gang from 2 to 4 pm, mini photo sessions by SaltyKay Photography from 1 to 3 pm and a curated selection of local vendors offering crafts, vintage treasures, handmade goods, unique services, and more. We will be serving up specialty cocktails and seasonal small bites to savor while you wander the market. Bring the whole family for this free event. The Munchery, 1797 South Main Street.



IRENE'S UPIC FLOWERS
will be available for 4 more weeks only

Come to Irene's Garden at the Black Oak Ranch in Laytonville, any time of day.

\$0.50 cents per stem
Bring a bucket & scissors

Willits Senior Center and Willits Lions Club

Drive Thru Chicken Dinner
Delivery Fee \$5
A Benefit for Harrah's Senior Center
Friday September 26, 2025
5:00pm - 6:30pm
Pre-Sale Tickets Only
Available at the Senior Center or online www.WillitsSeniorCenter.com

Dinner for 2 \$40
1/2 BBQ Chicken
Cole Slaw * Calico Beans * Rolls * Brownies
1501 Baechtel Road Willits

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549 Central Ave., Willits, CA 95490

September 20th, 2025
Anyone with questions contact cstack@cityofwillits.org

CLEAN UP WILLITS!

9AM-12, SEPT 20, MEET AT CITY HALL

Join us in making our community cleaner, greener, and more beautiful! We invite you to be a part of our Community Clean-Up event, where we will come together to make a positive impact on our environment.

Rhythm & Flow
Autumn Session 2025
Begin September 16th
Tuesdays 4-5:30pm
Register Today
mvmntmedicin@gmail.com
Willits Center for the Arts 71 E. Commercial St. Upstairs Studio

YENGAR YOGA
A practice for resilience and freedom
Discover how yoga can energize your body and improve mental clarity, emotional stability and circulation.
MONDAYS 6:00 - 7:30PM
\$15 PER CLASS
SEPT 8, 15, 22 & 29
(NO CLASS LABOR DAY)
Willits Center FOR THE ARTS
1726 S. MAIN ST., STE B, WILLITS, CA
707-459-6420
707-459-0596
707-459-6369

NOYO Theater Willits, CA.

57 East Commercial Street - Willits
707-459-6660
www.noyotheater.com

DOWNTON ABBEY: THE GRAND FINALE
(PG) 2hr 3min
Fri - Sat - Sun: 4:15, 7:15
Wed - Thur: 4:30, 7:30
Showtimes: September 12 - 18

THE COLUMBIA RIVER CANOE PROJECT
(NR) 1hr 5min
Fri - Sat - Sun: 4:30, 7:30
Wed - Thur: 4:30, 7:30
Closed Monday/Tuesday

THE CONJURING: LAST RITES
(R) 2hr 15min
Fri - Sat - Sun: 4:00, 7:00
Wed - Thur: 4:00, 7:00
Thrifty Thursday: \$8.00 tickets. Thrifty Thursday films this week in red.

True West at WCT: This play shows tonight, Friday, September 19 at 7 pm at Willits Community Theatre. More info see Sept 12 listing.

Saturday, September 20



Blue Luke at Shanachie: The soul of the blues, the groove of funk, the grit of rock & roll and the harmonies of jazz brought into the modern world, Saturday, September 20 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub.

True West at WCT: This play shows tonight, Saturday, September 20 at 7 pm at Willits Community Theatre. For more info see Sept 12 listing.

Hog Farm Celebration at Black Oak Ranch: Event continues on Saturday, September 20 with music by Poor Man's Whiskey, Grassomoxoa, and Moonalice. Black Oak Ranch, Laytonville. More info see Sept 19 listing.

Sunday, September 21

WCT Hearts for the Arts Gala at Whistle Stop Cafe: A fundraiser for Willits Community Theatre featuring dinner catered by the Lions Club, live music from Malakai Schindell and a lively auction. Seating is limited so reserve your ticket at eventbrite.com. Sunday, September 21 at 5 pm in the Courtyard of the Whistle Stop Cafe, 280 East Commercial St.

True West at WCT: Matinee showing of True West, Sunday, September 21 at 2 pm at the Willits Community Theatre. For more info see September 12 listing.

HSMC & Roots of Motor Power presentation at the Grange: A presentation by Chris Baldo on the Northwestern Redwood Company on September 21 at 1 pm at the Little Lake Grange. Afterward, attendees are invited to the Root of Motive Power facilities for refreshments and a tour of their collection. Cost is \$10. Please RSVP at mendocinocountyhistory.org/event so we can get a rough count.

HSMC HISTORY TALK

SEPT 21- 1 PM

This history of the Northwestern Redwood Company

Presented by Chris Baldo and Roots of Motive Power

\$10 at the door

Location: Little Lake Grange, 291 School St. Willits, CA

FLOURISH & FLOW
MENDOCINO
WILLITS & FLOW STUDIO

September Challenge

WILLITS SENIOR CENTER
SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

Bring Non Perishable Food or Small Sized Medical Equipment for the Senior Center
Get a Raffle Ticket to Win

30 Minute Red Light Therapy Session

1726 S. MAIN ST., STE B, WILLITS, CA

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COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

‘Americana’



Dan Essman
Columnist

The Story: Crime/chase/killing-spree flick with a script that's so tight it squeaks. A collector of Indian artifacts hires a psychopathic thief

to steal a Lakota Sioux Ghost Dance shirt. It's a sacred object and apparently worth a fortune to greedy scumbag artifact hunters who have no right to even touch such objects. Meanwhile Cal, a young white boy insists that he is the reincarnation of Indian Chief Sitting Bull. Cal's mother Halsey is trying to escape her marriage to Dillon, a demanding ruthless bully (and murderer!). A sensitive coffee shop waitress with freckles and a stutter (Sydney Sweeny!) dreams of going to Nashville and being a singer like her idols Tammy and Dolly, and she learns about the upcoming theft.

But no more teases from me. All of the above leads to lots of folks getting abruptly and bloodily sent to their maker. It's homicidal mayhem among thieves, and then righteous Indian warriors get involved. After all, it is their heritage. At the end, judgment for everyone is delivered and justice is served. And the audience applauds.

My Thoughts: 63% on Rottentomatoes means (to me) that 37% of those self-important scribblers were hungover or maybe just have neurological conditions that make paying attention difficult. (Having worked in special education, they have my sympathies.) Ignore the downers. Go see the movie.

What struck me the most about the story is that characters' unusual choices are coherent and their actions justified by their backstories. This is a wild flick. Explosive. Sad. Funny. I loved it.

Parents: This flick is for teens and up.

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

INNER EARTH TEA & THE MUSE PRESENT

Block PARTY!

SATURDAY 12 TO 4PM | **SEPT 13** | MUSIC | ART | COMMUNITY

ARTISTS: HEALING ARTS, APIARY & HERBAL PRODUCTS, HERBALISTS, TEA, MUSIC, KIDS' FUN, AND SO MUCH MORE

Community participation for Rec Grove's Mural
Painting Project!
Raffle drawings / Chair massage / Sun and shade / Community connections / Family friendly event

RIGHT OFF MAIN ST:
30 E SAN FRANCISCO, WILLITS

Would you like to set up a table and feature your trade/skill/craft? Contact Meredith at 707-843-0703.

Eckankar Dreams Workshop September 27

Join us on Saturday, September 27 from 2 to 3:30 pm for this Eckankar-sponsored, free workshop designed to help you gain a better understanding of your dreams, gain relief from nightmares and fears and learn simple tools to help your dreams give you answers to challenges and goals. This workshop is family-friendly, welcomes all faiths and will be held at the Willits Community Center, 111 East Commercial Street.

C BROWNS R N E R

Groceries
Beer & Wine
Gas & Diesel
Pay at the Pump

7am - 10pm
459-4854
1799 So. Main St.
P.O. Box 428

FARMERS INSURANCE

Randall Cantua, LUTCF
Agent
Cantua Insurance Agency
16 W. Valley St. Willits CA 95490
786 Redwood Drive
Garberville, CA 95542
Tel 707.459.3276
Tel 707.923.2179
Fax 707.923.9550
rcantua@farmersagent.com
067822

September: Small jobs, big impact

Fall in Willits – tree fruits are ripening, many perennial flowers are having a second bloom, and summer crops are still in their glory. But as the days get shorter and busier, it's easy to miss some fall harvests, to lose track of outdoor chores, or to procrastinate your fall planting.

A few years ago, I started doing what I like to call Ninja Gardening. The goal is to have no half-finished projects hanging over my head. I imagine tasks as 10-minute jobs, 20-minute jobs, 30-minute jobs. If I have an hour-long chore looming, I can either make it into two 30-minute jobs or save it for a day when I can enjoy an hour gardening. Those small, unpressured times in the garden pay off in more harvests, fewer problems, and lots more satisfaction.

Here are some big-impact small jobs to do this month:

Salads are finally easy again! Plant winter lettuce, spinach, cilantro, greens, radishes, arugula, Chinese cabbage, salad turnips, escarole, endive, Miner's lettuce, mâché, chicory, pea shoots, and other fast-growing fall crops.

Plants are often short of potassium, which helps them cope with cold nights. Sprinkle kelp meal, seaweed extract, or woodstove ash around your crops for better hardiness.

Another issue in fall is aphids, which suck the juice out of your plants and make mold more likely. Poison sprays kill ladybugs and other beneficials, letting the aphids multiply even more. Instead, put out ant bait. (Look for the boron-based types.) Ants bring aphids to the plant and protect them from predators. With the ants gone, simple sprays like compost tea plus natural predators can often control the aphids.

Speaking of compost tea, combat powdery mildew with simple fermented sprays. If you don't have compost tea, mix 1 tablespoon yogurt into a gallon of water. Good microbes fight bad ones.

Plant cover crops now! Easy cover crops for home gardens are vetch, winter peas, and crimson clover. If you wait until your

tomatoes are done, there won't be time for cover crops to get roots big enough to hold the soil and create fertility. Doing one bed at a time keeps it manageable.

1. Clear out the things you can – weeds, plants that aren't producing anymore, etc.
2. Rough up the soil with a rake or hand cultivator.
3. Scatter your cover crop seed, tossing it under and around any existing plants like tomatoes.
4. Rake it in. If you can't cover the seed with soil, use a light layer of mulch or even old potting soil to keep it hidden from birds.


Fall provides the year's biggest bonus for the garden: free fertility in the form of fallen leaves. Before they start to fall, figure out where you'll put them (and how to get more if possible.) They are well-balanced nutrition and the cheapest, easiest mulch of all.

Wood chips have become easy to get in the wake of mandated tree work, and can be a great solution for paths or around perennials. Used in the right ways, they can be a fertility source for the garden too. English garden master Charles Dowling has a new video on YouTube describing the ways he uses them in his highly productive market garden. It's called "Woody Goodies," and I recommend his low-key, hype-free approach.

Set up a compost pile now, so you can add to it as you clear the garden. If your bin or pile is already there, you can add those wormy apples, a handful of weeds, fallen leaves from the driveway, or the dead tomato vines as they appear.


Harvesting is especially important as rain enters the picture. Once tomatoes start to turn red, they will often crack, rot, or lose flavor when it rains. Harvest before the rain and ripen indoors for best flavor. (Supermarket tomatoes are harvested totally green; those with red on them can develop full flavor.) Anything that touches the ground – squash, melons, cukes, etc. – is also vulnerable. Harvest quickly, and put

Read the rest of **Garden** | Over on page 9






TRANSFORM LIVES, BUILD LEGACIES

Multiple civil service positions available at our new CCC Mendocino Center in Willits.



Explore our positions & learn the hiring process!
ccc.ca.gov/career

Questions? 916-341-3221 | careers@ccc.ca.gov





At top, from left: Fennel is easy to grow now, for harvest in October. It is good raw or cooked, and makes a great substitute for celery. If you want a crop that grows through the winter, enriches the soil, attracts beneficials, and also produces a food crop, try fava beans, or their smaller, hardier cousin, bell beans. Their dramatic black-and-white flowers appear in March or April, followed by edible beans in June. Probably the easiest cover crop for a home garden is purple vetch. After enriching the soil all winter, it's easy to cut and use for mulch. Above, from left: Phacelia "Bee's Friend" is a native California wildflower that protects the soil all winter, then attracts beneficial insects with its lavender blooms. An easy and hardy green for both salad and cooking is Sugarloaf Chicory, a favorite in Italy and France. It's worth looking for lettuces bred for winter conditions, rather than just planting the regular spring varieties. Strains like this "Hungarian Pink Winter" are favorites for flavor, as well as resistance to mildew and ability to grow in the dim light of winter.



At top, from left: All the Asian greens are easy and fast in fall. Their mild flavor and crunchy texture is perfect for stir-fry, soup, or salad. Spinach comes in three leaf types: flat, savoyed (crinkled), and arrowhead. The savoy and arrowhead types are the sweetest-flavored, as well as the most cold-hardy. Radishes are an easy crop now, along with the even sweeter salad turnips. Above, from left: Nasturtiums love cool conditions and don't grow well in hot summer weather. They produce abundant edible leaves and blooms in fall. Chinese cabbage is easy this time of year, but hard to grow in spring. Plant now for juicy, crunchy heads. Arugula is one of the fastest-growing fall vegetables, and lasts all winter in our climate.

YES on Prop 50

ON NOVEMBER 4

Fair Elections Decided by California Voters

In response to Trump ordering Texas to break all rules and gerrymander its Congressional seats (disenfranchising millions of Texas voters), California's Prop. 50 will level the playing field, temporarily redrawing California Congressional maps.*

Prop. 50:

- Provides hope for a balanced Congress that will rein in Trump's abuses of power and attempts to suppress voting.
- Is fair & proportional; it complies with Fair Redistricting guidelines, as confirmed by Common Cause (which found Texas redistricting did NOT).
- It gives power to the voters, to affirm or reject (TX did not).
- It is temporary: CA will revert to the Independent Commission to draw boundaries after the 2030 Census.
- It commits to fair redistricting nationwide. The GOP opponents hypocritically reject independent commissions.


Don't let Trump pack Congress the way he has packed the Courts. **Vote yes on Prop. 50 on Nov. 4th.**

Partial list of local endorsers: Mike McGuire; Chris Rogers; John Haschak; Dr. Monte Lieberfarb; Dr. Angus Matheson; Dr. Mills Matheson; Martin & Saprina Rodriguez; Madge Strong; Kate Marianchild; Norma Hanson; Mary Burns, Linda Grace, Melinda Clarke, Jane McCabe and Robin Goldner.

To volunteer contact
mstrong827@outlook.com.

*Footnote re: Common Cause Analysis:

- California Meets, Texas Fails to Meet Common Cause's Redistricting Fairness Criteria



PAID FOR BY DAVID DRELL, SUZANNE MATHESON, AND MADGE STRONG

HELP WANTED:

Casino Controller at Sherwood Valley Casino

Benefits, Salary: \$98K - \$110K

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 mftizgerral@svrcasino.com or 707-459-7350.



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LEGAL NOTICES

WW555 Fictitious Business Name Statement 2025-F0360 The following person or persons are doing business as Tight Line Painting, 171 Crestview Street, Willits, CA 95490. Registered owner: Justin Allen Johnson, 171 Crestview 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 August 4, 2025. FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on August 16, 2025. /s/ Justin Johnson Publication Dates: September 4, 11, 18, 25, 2025	WW554 Fictitious Business Name Statement 2025-F0380 The following person or persons are doing business as Root And Ritual, 70 Nancy Lane, Willits, CA 95490. Registered owner: Veronica G. Fani, 70 Nancy Lane, 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 August 29, 2025. /s/ Veronica G. Fani Publication Dates: September 4, 11, 18, 25, 2025
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WW556

NOTICE

A seat on the Round Valley Unified School District's Board of Trustees became vacant on August 5, 2025.

Clarence Roy Britton was provisionally appointed to the vacant seat on August 25, 2025.

Unless a petition calling for a special election pursuant to Education Code 5091 is filed in the office of the County Superintendent within 30 days of the provisional appointment, it shall become an effective appointment.

Publication Date: September 11, 2025



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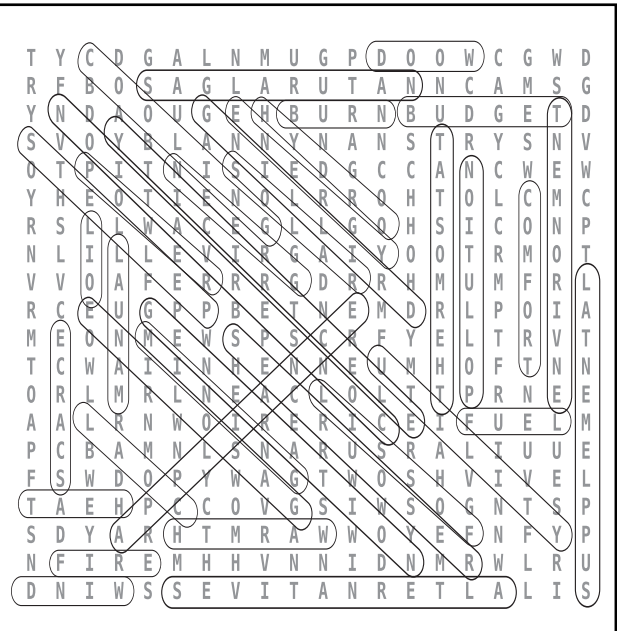
Contact Melissa at (707) 513-5705 | eastsideranchwillits@gmail.com

Read the rest of **Garden** | From page 8

a tile, board, or other impervious surface under any unripe melons or winter squash to protect both from rot and from tunneling rodents.

It's hard to let go of tomato season, always too short here in Willits. But in some ways, this may be the best time of all, when hiking and working outdoors are comfortable again, when fruit weighs down the branches, and when summer's work is rewarded with fall's harvest.

Jamie Chevalier of Quail Seeds lives and gardens near Willits. Visit www.quailseeds.com for over 400 varieties of seed adapted to the Northern California climate, as well as extensive how-to information.



Read the rest of **WCA** | From page 5

a counterbalance. It's about a 35-pound door. We start soaking it in the front for about two days. The pots get to be red hot. We have ceramic cones in there that melt at a certain temperature. It's part of the way that we can gauge the temperature. We use those cones and the color of the kiln. It goes from black, and it starts to turn red and cherry red and then orange and then yellow. When it's white-hot is when we are pretty much done.

"There's no glaze or anything on the pots when they go in," said Campbell. "The ash lands on the pot and it fuses with the silica and it melts into the clay. The silica of the clay and the ash makes glass. There's not much control on the pattern and color. Experience helps. There are places in the kiln where the temperatures vary and certain kinds of clay react differently to the heat. Porcelain grabs the ash. It really likes the porcelain. The more blues and greens are on porcelain. Porcelain is mostly made out of kaolin clay. It's primary clay that is weathered-out granite and feldspar."

Sanovich loves the "spontaneity of each firing and how it affects the work. We can kind of nudge things in a certain direction but ultimately, we never really know how it's going to turn out. In gas-firing, you pretty much know what things are going to look like. With wood-firing, it's always pretty much a surprise. It's always different. It keeps it interesting."

Another interesting aspect is the social manner in which the firings are done. There is a crew of eight or 10 people who constantly keep the fire burning at the correct temperature in shifts. "Most of the cast and crew are the same but we have different people at times," said Sanovich. "There's some mentorship that happens. We're always learning. There's a community aspect to it as well. There are people who are 20 firing in our crew and there are people who are close to 80. No one is excluded. Everyone brings something different to the process."

Gomez enjoys creating sculptures of the animals that she loves. "I always did sculpture," explained Gomez. "I never really learned to use a wheel. I've been good friends with Leslie for some 60 years. When she said she was going to be building this wood kiln, and she explained to me how it all works, I became completely intrigued and found I couldn't stay away. The social aspect of it is so fantastic. It's like an eight-day pajama party. Everybody is stoking the fire, 24 / 7 and trying to stay fed and watered. Also, I like to work with clay.

"It takes about a week for the pots to cool off," said Gomez. "Once you get it up to its maximum temperature, you have to go away and let it cool for a week and then come back to a really fun social event. Everybody is there for the unveiling. You take the bricks all off the front of the kiln. Then, we always form like a bucket-brigade. Each piece that comes out is handled and looked at by each of the participants as we fill up the tables. It's kind of a ritual."

"Painted With Fire" will be on display at Willits Center for the Arts through September 28.

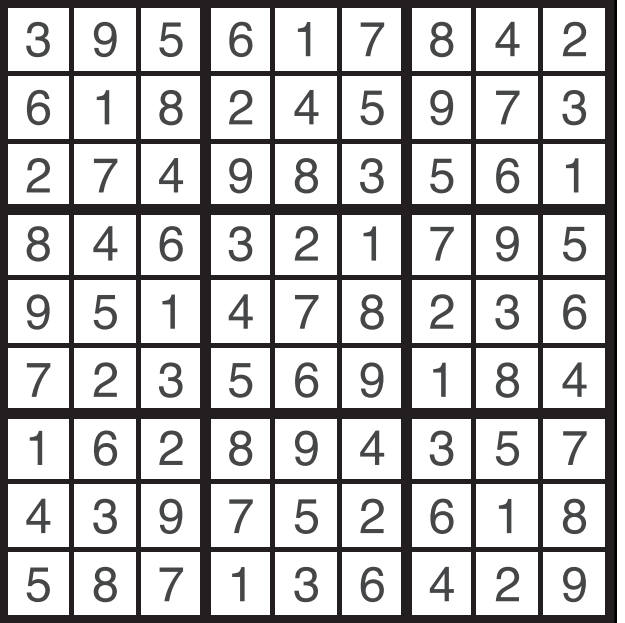
The gallery, located at 71 East Commercial Street is open to the public Friday and Saturday 11 am to 5 pm. For more info, call 459-1726 or visit www.willitscenterforthearts.org/.

Read the rest of **Roots** | From page 3

membership, three newsletters, and two free tickets to the barbecue. Mail your check to P.O. Box 1540, Willits, 95490 to become a member," explained Kamoroff.

Several of the volunteers are experts in certain machines and enjoy telling people about every aspect of their apparatus. Alan Spivak runs the Eastep engine. "I've been running it for 16 years now," said Spivak. "This was used for hauling logs out of the forest, to replace the steam donkeys. It has three, used to have four, steel cables on drums, for moving logs on a highline. Since they were loading onto rail cars at the time, it was real handy to have this thing on a rail car. This weighs about 48,000 pounds [24 tons]. The engine alone is 18,000 pounds. It pulls 300 horsepower at 250 rpm, which means, that's a lot of torque. It will pull 55,000 pounds on a highline [suspended]. This car has to be well-anchored because it has no brakes. There's a trolley on the cable that it pulls. The trolley does the lifting and keeps tension on the highline. This was made in 1928."

Another machine, this one not formerly seen by the



CLASSIFIEDS

Benefit Fundraiser for Nuestra Alianza

Garage Sale Fundraiser for Nuestra Alianza. Saturday, September 20, 9 am to 4 pm. Come find your treasure! 227 South Humboldt. Plenty of parking across street.

Free Food for All Pop-Up

Mendocino Food Network presents food pop-ups with free food for all. Due to the impact of federal budget cuts, there will be only one monthly pop-up in Willits, on 1st Thursdays, from 10 to 11:30 am at 1250 Blosser Lane. In Laytonville, every 4th Thursday, 12 to 1 pm at 300 Canto 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: Rachelie@mendocinood.org; 707-615-6654.

Brown Bag Lunch Program

Every Saturday at 1 pm sack lunches are served by local churches, community organizations, and families at Bud Snider Park on East Commercial. . Come at 1 pm to be assured a lunch!

Do you need food?

Willits Food Bank, 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) 459-3333

For Sale

Firewood, Fir, 1/2 cord delivered \$175.00. Call 707-354-4394.

Classified ads are just \$15 for 30 words for two weeks. Email us your ad today to include your ad here next week! Deadline is Monday for Thursday's paper

John Ford Ranch Beef

John Ford Ranch still has the 50 lb. Rancher's Choice Box for \$390.00 and the 25 lb. Hamburger Box for \$170.00. Please contact Debbie Arkelian @ 459-5049.

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.oakrvnive.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 and bookings: kikibtatooos.com

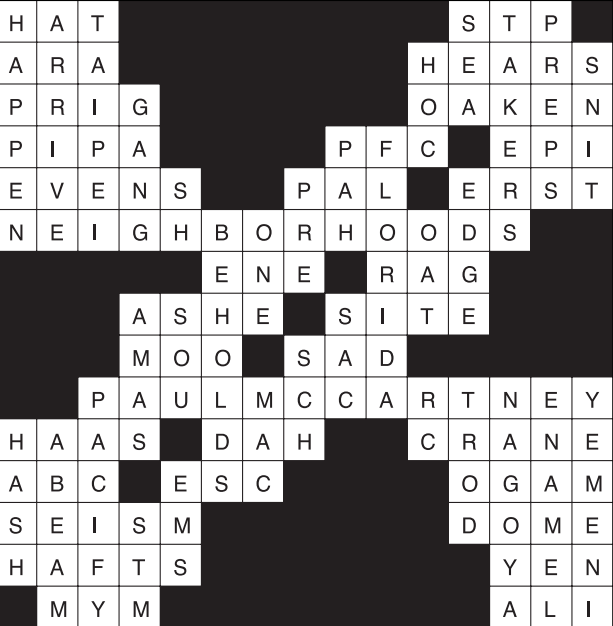
public, is the Keystone Drill, which was used for prospecting gold. "This machine is unique because it is self-propelled. You can see the gears. It's a bit like a tractor. It was built for prospecting gold in the early days. They would drill holes down and look in at the sand and see if it had any gold. It's a drill rig," said volunteer Dana Davis.

Across Commercial Street, at Recreation Grove Park, was an array of smaller machines, all puffing and clanking and fascinating both the kids and adults. Further into the park, amateur artists were trying their hand at creating linoleum block prints, which after inking, were run over by the extremely heavy Buffalo Springfield steam roller, utilizing its weight to press the ink onto the paper in the areas of the linoleum that have not been cut out.

Later on, the annual members' barbecue served a couple hundred hungry families with pulled pork, beans, salad, rolls, etc. They dined under the trees on long communal tables. Prior to the dinner, people could peruse the various silent auction items, enter a raffle, and see what would be live auctioned later. This year, Tom Allman will try and sell some interesting machines, a working antique tractor, and a beautiful large redwood picnic table.

"This is an incredible crowd," commented Allman. "There's going to be over 200 people here, at the barbecue and auction. The vast majority of these people are out-of-towners. When I look at a crowd and I can't name six people at a table, these people are from out of town. This is an economic draw for Willits," said Allman who loves to tell remembrances of his days in Willits. "I don't know if you remember Gordon Logan. He was the city manager. He envisioned the train track going around the baseball and soccer fields. We all said he was crazy. That'll never work. But that is exactly what is happening today. The train was going around the soccer fields and baseball fields. Kids were laughing. Adults were eating popcorn. This was a Gordon Logan day, absolutely."

For further information about the Roots of Motive Power, visit <https://rootsofmotivepower.com/>.





Cheerful Taz

Taz is a whirlwind dervish of happiness! He has a very smooth coat, floppy ears, a long, skinny tail, and long legs. This guy has energy and enthusiasm to spare! Taz would be a fun dog for active people, he loves to go swimming or just be around water.

He would make a great running companion. With training, consistency, and lots of exercise, this boy will make a great addition to the right home. Tall fences are a good idea as well. He loves to play a game of fetch that includes swimming.

We took Taz to The Cat House at the Sanctuary, where cats lounge and hide out. He was very interested in the smells, and a little curious about the few cats he saw. He was not eagerly pulling on the leash, or extremely intent on the cats. We believe he would do well in a house with cats as long as they had a well-monitored introduction period.

To learn more about Taz, or to view other adoptable animals, visit www.milofoundation.org or the Milo Foundation Sanctuary Facebook page. The sanctuary is currently doing pet adoptions by appointment only. Please complete a pet-adoption application before requesting an appointment. You can reach the Milo Foundation at 459-4900.

Spunky Crocus

Crocus is a handsome young cat ready to find his fur-ever home! He has been at the shelter since 8/28/24 at no fault of his own. He was brought in as a small kitten and has unfortunately grown up here. Crocus loves to show off his parkour skills, play with cat toys, and explore the cat room. If you're looking for a fun, spunky cat, look no further!

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter, located at 298 Plant

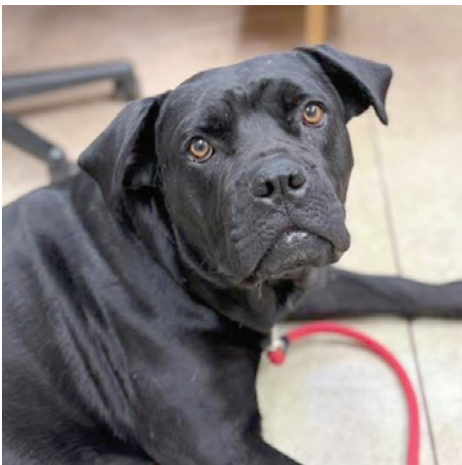
Road in Ukiah, is open to the public from 9:30 am to 5 pm Tuesday through Friday, and 10 am to 3 pm on Saturdays (closed for lunch each day from 1 to 1:30 pm). Make sure to pre-fill out the adoption application available at www.mendoanimalshelter.com. Call 707-463-4427 for more information.

Sweet Cece

Cece's adoption fee is FULLY SPONSORED! \$0 cost adoption fee thanks to Lucchetti Earthworks!

This black beauty is Cece! Rescued from the streets with an embedded collar, life wasn't so kind to this puppy. But do not fear, operation kindness and love is in full effect! These days, Cece is being treated like the queen she is, and we are excited to find her a home she deserves! Cece has lived in foster homes so check in for more information or come on by and meet her during open hours!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino is located at 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley. Feel free to visit us, no appointments needed! We are open Wednesday through Friday, 1 to 5 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 3 pm; closed Monday and Tuesday. Check out all of our available dogs and cats on our website: www.mendohumaneociety.com, on our Facebook page, and on www.petfinder.com.



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Good Farm Fund celebrates local food resilience at 10th anniversary Farm Raiser, September 16

Submitted by Good Farm Fund

Join the Good Farm Fund at Yokayo Ranch on Tuesday, September 16, for the 10th Anniversary Farm-Raiser — a night of food, community, and impact.

For the past decade, the organization has partnered with farmers, chefs, and community members to grow a food system that's resilient, equitable, nutritious, and delicious. And it's working: Since 2015, Good Farm Fund has granted over \$600,000 to 50+ local farms for projects like irrigation, fencing, cold storage, fire recovery, and more. They have also raised over \$35,000 for their Market Match Program, helping CalFresh families access fresh, local produce.

A group of prominent chefs paired with local farms is joining forces this year to create unforgettable dishes that tell the story of Mendocino County. This event offers a unique opportunity to savor food crafted by chefs collaborating directly with local farms, connect with food enthusiasts and changemakers, and support small farms and food access programs in our community.

Here is a glimpse of the culinary stars who are bringing their talents, creativity, and the very best local ingredients to the Good Farm Fund 10th Anniversary Farm Raiser on September 16 at Yokayo Ranch.

This is a true taste of our region: the highest quality food, grown with care through the most responsible farming

practices, and transformed into unforgettable dishes by these amazing chefs:

Michelle Costa, Mendo Ferments; Makonnen Nile Blessed, The Record; Erica Schneider, Fog Eater Café; BreeAnn Kesterson, Patrona Restaurant & Lounge & Chef's Table Catering; Ian Scharlotta, Bee the Change Microfarm; David Hopps, Izakaya Gama; Olan Cox, Bonterra; Matthew Allison, Ukiah Brewing Co; Noah Thomas McKeown, Left Coast Seafood; Ben Kater & Earl Chavez, Big Earl's BBQ; Bailee Dayton, Farola Empanadas Argentinas; Fernando Plazola, Cultivo ...and more

"We hope the whole community will join us to celebrate our local farms," said Sarah Bodnar, co-founder of the Good Farm Fund and CEO of West Business Development Center. "This milestone is about honoring 10 years of impact and fueling the next decade of food security. Let's celebrate our delicious and plentiful local food — and plant the seeds for the next decade of impact."

When & Where: Tuesday, September 16, 2025, from 5:30 to 9:30 pm at Yokayo Ranch, Ukiah. Tickets and details: GoodFarmFund.org

Call for artists / crafters for WCA's Holiday Craft Fair

Submitted by WCA

Willits Center for the Arts is accepting entries for the 38th annual Holiday Craft Fair, December 13 and 14, 2025 to be held at the Willits Community Center and Willits Center for the Arts. This is a two-day show: Saturday, from 10 am to 7 pm, and Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. All interested artists, hand crafters, and specialty foods entrepreneurs, who hand-make their own products, should request application forms by e-mail to: Bonnie Belt at belt.bonnie@gmail.com Or visit: www.willitscenterforthearts.org or by mail: Willits Holiday Craft Fair c/o Bonnie Belt,

2291 Buckeye Dr. Willits, CA 95490 and enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Please note acceptance is subject to quality of work and earliest postmark date. Applications will be accepted until all booths are filled. For best booth placement apply early!! For further information you can call Bonnie Belt at 707-459-4792 (landline) and leave a message with your phone number, email to belt.bonnie@gmail.com or visit www.willitscenterforthearts.org.

The rest of

Baker

From page 1

our students can focus on learning in a secure environment and that families can have peace of mind each day their children are with us.

While cameras are only one part of a comprehensive safety plan, they represent our commitment to taking proactive steps to safeguard our schools. The investment reflects the dedication of our Board of Trustees, district leadership, and staff to creating a safe and welcoming place for all students to thrive.

Clarifying staffing concerns

Recently, there was a statement made that suggested a "dropping number of teachers" in our district. That is not the case. Our staffing levels remain steady and aligned with student enrollment, class size requirements, and contractual ratios. In fact, the district has been proactive in hiring and continues to fill positions to meet student needs. Over the last several years, the number of certificated staff has remained stable, and in some areas we have even added positions to strengthen student support.

While we acknowledge that staffing shortages are a statewide challenge, Willits Unified has not experienced a decline in teachers. Instead, we continue to prioritize recruitment, retention, and support so that every classroom is fully staffed, and our students receive the education they deserve.

It is important to clarify that teachers are not being "forced" to purchase classroom materials out of their own pockets. It is an exaggeration. The district has systems in place to provide supplies through planned bulk orders, which are designed to save money and stretch resources further for all schools. While there may sometimes be a delay in the arrival of these supplies, discretionary funds are available at each site to ensure immediate needs can still be met. Teachers are encouraged to work with their school leadership to access those funds so that students receive what they need.

Music at Willits High School

It is not budget driven at all. Despite rumors to the contrary, the district did not eliminate music to save money. The main issue was **lack of student interest** at the high school level: Only about 17 students (often fewer) were interested in early

August. With numbers that "low," the district struggled to justify staffing and scheduling a full music class. By contrast, participation at Baechtel Grove Middle School remains healthy, which suggests that younger students are still excited about making music.

We have advertised for a music teacher and are still waiting for qualified applicants. In the meantime, the district is exploring ways to build interest early so that incoming high schoolers are more likely to enroll. One proposal is to introduce robust music instruction in elementary grades so that students arrive in middle school and high school already engaged and eager to continue. At this moment, we have a zero period music class at the high school allowing high school students to have music. Also, we have a music club during lunch time.

I care deeply about our high school music program because it plays such an important role in the lives of our students. Music not only enriches their education, but also nurtures creativity, discipline, and a deeper appreciation for the arts. For many students, these experiences spark a lifelong love of music that can grow into personal passions or even future academic pursuits in college. Supporting the music program ensures that students continue to have opportunities to discover, explore, and expand their talents in meaningful ways.

As someone who values a well rounded education, I'm saddened that Willits High School's music program has dwindled in recent years. Our middle schoolers clearly enjoy band and choir, and they deserve a place to continue their studies in high school. Music shouldn't be an afterthought; it's essential to fostering creativity, collaboration, and academic resilience.

I believe Willits needs a dedicated music program at all grade levels. If high schoolers don't have a music option, those who thrive on artistic expression may feel their needs are marginalized. Moreover, offering music classes signals to families that our district values the arts alongside academics, agriculture and athletics. I hope the district will redouble its efforts to recruit a qualified music teacher, build excitement among students, and restore a program that reflects the importance of music in education.

The rest of

Deer

From page 2

• Virtual Platform: Zoom. <https://wildlife-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/88628762826>

Input received during this scoping session will help guide the preparation of a draft plan, which CDFW anticipates releasing for public review in early 2026.

The development of the Statewide Deer Conservation and Management Plan follows on the heels of the Black Bear Conservation and Management Plan for California <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=231227&inline> and The Conservation and Management Plan for Bighorn Sheep in California <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=232342&inline> – both of which were released in April 2025.

For more information about the Statewide Deer Conservation and Management Plan or the public input meeting, please contact: Brian Leo, Statewide Deer Coordinator, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov

Soccer, steam, and community spirit: Mendocino County Sports Academy fall season kicks off in Willits

Submitted by Mendocino County Sports Academy

This past Saturday, September 6, the Gordon Logan Sports Complex in Willits was buzzing with life as more than 20 youth soccer teams from across Mendocino County gathered for the opening weekend of the Mendocino County Sports Academy's Developmental Soccer League. Over 200 kids and their families filled the fields for the first regular-season matches of the fall, bringing with them a community spirit that stretched well beyond the sidelines.

The day was nothing short of idyllic. Just across the fence, the historic locomotives of the Roots of Motive Power were firing up for their annual Steam Festival, and throughout the morning, whistles and bells echoed across the fields as a train circled the grounds. For visiting families from the coast, Ukiah, and beyond, it was a uniquely Willits experience; a rare chance to watch their kids compete while steam engines puffed clouds of white against the blue sky.

"It doesn't get more small-town beautiful than this," said MCSA Executive Director Ian Fitzpatrick. "Soccer and steam trains in the same place, you could see it on the kids' faces and the parents' too. Everyone was having fun."

A countywide celebration

Saturday marked the first of three DSL weekends to be hosted in Willits this fall, with additional game days scheduled in Ukiah. Teams rotated through matches on six fields, and the turnout reflected the program's steady growth across the county. Families from Mendocino Coast to Laytonville, and everywhere in between, made the trip to Willits for the opener.

Local businesses felt the impact, too. Families were encouraged to stop by MCSA sponsors J.D. Redhouse and Taqueria Bravo while in town, and many did. "That's part of the beauty of sports," Fitzpatrick noted. "It doesn't just benefit the kids – it brings people into our communities to eat, shop, and experience what makes places like Willits special."

Building soccer from the ground up

The DSL program is at the heart of MCSA's mission: creating opportunities for kids to train, learn, and grow in their own communities. In Willits, players train twice a week and then compete on weekends, rotating game days between Willits and Ukiah, with a preseason tournament each year in Mendocino.

Soccer in Willits is thriving, thanks in large part to the leadership of Coach Juan Jacinto, who took over the program this year. Jacinto and his staff bring not just technical soccer knowledge but also a deep passion for teaching life skills through sport.

"Soccer is more than a game for these kids," Jacinto said. "We're teaching resilience, teamwork, and how to push through challenges. Those lessons matter just as much off the field as they do on it."

In addition to DSL, MCSA offers its Grassroots Academy for children ages 3 to 7. This entry-level program focuses on fun, safe play while building skills and confidence before kids are introduced to

formal games. Together, Grassroots and DSL form critical steps in MCSA's player pathway, which culminates in Select Teams for those who want to compete at higher levels. Already, more than 20 percent of MCSA's Select Team players have come through the Willits Grassroots and DSL programs.

From youth to high school impact

MCSA's presence in Willits began in 2019, and the investment is already paying off. Players who started in Grassroots and DSL are now moving into Willits High School, where they've made an immediate impact. Just last year, the Willits High girls' soccer team captured its first league title in 19 years, with several WHS players with MCSA roots.

"That's the long-term vision coming full circle," Fitzpatrick said. "It starts with kids kicking a ball around at age 4 or 5, and 10 years later they're helping Willits High win championships. It shows what's possible when a community commits to building from the ground up."

More than a game: an economic engine

For a town like Willits, events like Saturday's DSL kickoff are about more than just soccer. They provide a snapshot of what youth sports can mean for the local economy. With over 200 families in attendance – many from outside the area – restaurants, shops, and community landmarks saw an influx of visitors.

As Willits looks for ways to boost tourism and economic vitality, youth sports offer a clear opportunity. "The answer is right in front of us," Fitzpatrick said. "Invest in our kids. Give them fields, programs, and opportunities, and not only do they grow, you strengthen the community and the local economy."

MCSA's long-term vision includes expanded facilities, which have proven in other rural communities to be powerful economic drivers. "When families travel for sports, they spend money," Fitzpatrick explained. "Willits can position itself as a hub for youth development and sports tourism. Saturday was a glimpse of what that looks like."

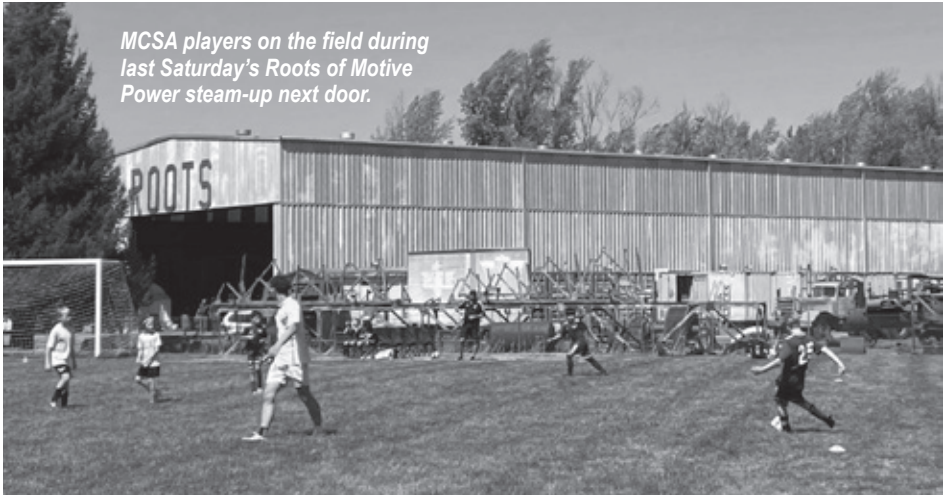
Soccer is alive and well in Willits

The takeaway from Saturday was clear: Soccer is alive and thriving in Willits. From the steam engines to the cheering parents to the determined young players, it was a day that celebrated both the game and the community.

For Fitzpatrick and Jacinto, the goal is to keep building. "We want every kid in Willits who wants to play soccer to have that chance," Jacinto said. "And we want them to know they're part of something bigger than themselves."

MCSA will return to Willits for two more DSL game days later this fall, continuing to bring families together, support local businesses, and grow the game.

For more information about sponsorship opportunities with MCSA, contact Ian Fitzpatrick at ian@MendocinoSports.com





MENDOCINO COUNTY FAIR & APPLE SHOW
SEPT. 12TH - 14TH, 2025

OPEN 9 AM TO MIDNIGHT DAILY!

FRIDAY, 9/12:
Free admission for children under 12
Admission is \$6 for seniors 65 and over
4 pm: Apple Bowl - Soccer

SATURDAY, 9/13:
8 pm: CCPRA Rodeo
9:30 pm: Dance - Dean Titus & the Coyote Cowboys

SUNDAY, 9/14:
10 am: Sheep Dog Trials
10 am: Classic Car Show
Noon: Parade
2 pm: CCPRA Rodeo
6 pm: Dance - Vales Del Rancho and Herenchue Reyes

GENERAL ADMISSION:
ADULTS \$10 / JUNIORS 13-18: \$8
KIDS 7-12: \$6 / 6 AND UNDER: FREE

Apple Tasting | Livestock | Wool & Fiber Show | Exhibits

BOONVILLE FAIRGROUNDS
See full schedule online: <http://mendocountyfair.com/>



NATIVE AMERICAN DAY

Friday, September 26

Earn 100 Todays Points
Receive \$10 in Free Play.
Show your Tribal ID.
And Receive \$20 Free Play.

SHERWOOD VALLEY CASINO
WWW.SVRCASINO.COM

THANK YOU!



To all of the buyers who helped reach
the 2025 Junior Livestock Auction total of

\$1,302,230.50



2025 Grand Champs



Grace Silva of the Potter Valley 4-H
sold her Grand Champion market lamb
to Sparetime Supply



Kenzie Osburn of the Ukiah FFA
sold her Grand Champion market hog
to Redwood Coast Fuels



Maren Neumiller of the Potter Valley FFA
sold her Grand Champion market goat
to Mendocino Roofing, Inc.



Whitney Fansler of the Potter Valley 4-H
sold her Grand Champion market steer
to Redwood Coast Fuels



Austin Weaver of the Ukiah Shamrock 4-H
sold his Grand Champion rabbit meat pen
to Rescue Solutions

Additional Thanks

An additional Thank You goes
out to the Mendocino County
Farm Bureau, Anderson
Logging and Taco Bell - Ukiah
for their sponsorship of the
buyer's hats and to the
Savings Bank of Mendocino
County for all of their hard
work throughout the event.

Aaction Rents
Acme Rigging & Supply Co.
Advanced Collision Repair
Alex Guzman
Alexander Valley Soils
All In Heating & Cooling
American AgCredit - Ukiah
Angie Gibson
Atlas Vineyard
Management
B & B Industrial
Hardware and Metal
Beckstoffer Vineyards
Blundell Ranch
Body Works Gym
Bonterra Organic Estates
Bouthillier's Construction,
Inc.
Bud Garman Construction
Services, Inc.
California Deer Association
Capistran Ranch
Cesar Yanez C Y Painting
Chase Vineyards
Chevalier Vineyard
Management, Inc.
Chris and Heather McMahan
Christensen Construction
& Concrete, Inc.
Cold Creek Compost, Inc.
CRMT Resources, Inc.
Cupples & Sons
Construction, Inc.
Cupples Excavating
Daniel Steel & Machine, Inc.
David Simmons Trucking
DC Technical Rescue
Deanna Windle
Deep Valley Security, Inc.
Defatte Equipment
Dennis Thibeault
DNA Hardwoods, LLC
Donahoo, Inc.
Drive-Thru Tree Park
Eddie Ranch
Elliott's Christmas Trees
Factory Pipe
Family Tree Service
Fonsen Cattle
Fonsen Young, LLC
Friedman's Home
Improvement
Furniture Design Center
Garman Family Land
Company, LLC
Garton Tractor, Inc.
Geo Aggregates
Goat-San Dairy Goats

Granite Construction
Company
Gravier's Laytonville
Chevron
Gregg Simpson Trucking
and Construction
Grow West Farm Supply
Happy Harvest
Harvest Market
Hatchet Mountain
Construction
Heavy Equipment Rentals
Hernandez Electric, Inc.
Highway 20 Feed
HydroPacific
Garden Supply
Intercounty Mechanical
& Electrical, Inc.
Johnson Builder
Johnson's Custom
Landscaping
Johnson's Quality Tree Care
& Logging Company
JRS Construction
Katrina Bartolomie
Keith's Market IGA
Les Schwab Tire
Center - Ukiah
Les Schwab Tire
Center - Willits
Long Valley Health Center
Lucchetti Construction
M & M Feed and Supply
Madeline Cline
MajorFarms, LLC
Mark Davis Insurance
Agency
MBC Construction
Company
McCarty's Auto Body
Melanie Mountanos
Mendo Mill - Ukiah
Mendocino County Deputy
Sheriff's Association
Mendocino County
Farm Bureau
Mendocino Forest Products
Mendocino Roofing, Inc.
Moreno Logging, LLC
Morgan Ingram
Myers Medical
Pharmacy
Next Generation
Heating & Cooling
Nor-Cal Recycled Rock
& Aggregates, Inc.
North Fork Lumber Co.
Northern Aggregates, Inc.
Novoa Construction
Odell Family

Ordway's Valley
Foothills Vineyard
Osburn Farm
Pacific Gas and Electric
Company
Pomilia Civil, Inc.
Poor Ranch
Rachel Fansler
Rainbow Ag
Raley's
Ramos and Ramos
Real Estate Team
Redwood Coast Fuels
Redwood Empire Sawmill
Redwood Empire
Title Company
Redwood Investments
Redwood Rooter
Rena Trimble
Rescue Solutions
Rosenthal Fire Mitigation
Round Valley Indian
Health Center
Round Valley Indian
Housing Authority
Round Valley Indian Tribes
Round Valley Indian Tribes
Convenience Store
Roundtree Glass
RW Auto Center
Ryan Hayes Insurance
Brokerage
Safeway - Fort Bragg
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Saving Bank of Mendocino
County
Scarlett Meat Co.
Seghesio Family Vineyards
Sparetime Supply
Steve Spackman
Superior Pump
& Drilling, Inc.
Sweet Cotton Tails
Taco Bell - Ukiah
Tara Dawn, Inc.
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Thompson Gas
Thurston Auto Plaza
Tom Snyder
Tonya's Business Services
Valley Paving
Vince Sigal Electric
Vulcan Materials Company
W6 Farm
Willits Redwood Company
WIPF Construction
Wylatti Resource
Management, Inc.