

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print
A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits
Donations Accepted Edition No. 135 **Thursday, December 10, 2015**



'Boil Water' notice issued to 20 Willits water customers lifted

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
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A "Boil Water" notice issued Monday morning to about 20 City of Willits water customers on the south end of town was lifted late Wednesday

Read the rest of **Water**
Over on Page 9

Willits man arrested on molestation charges

Willits Police Department officers arrested a 51-year-old Willits musician and music teacher December 2 at his East Hill Road home on suspicion of molesting a north county girl.

Officers arrested Kevin Sean Moynahan following an extensive WPD and Mendocino County District Attorney's Office investigation into allegations Moynahan had repeatedly sexually abused the girl over a period of years, starting

Read the rest of **Arrested**
Over on Page 9

Laytonville library progress 'sluggish'

Mike A'Dair
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Friends of the Long Valley Library President Susan Bradley told the board of supervisors and other county staff that the process of getting the old, mothballed bookmobile up to Laytonville for use as a library building has been "frustrating" to members of the group.

Bradley made the
Read the rest of **Library**
Over on Page 11

Nancy Runberg new Blosser Lane principal

Recently hired Blosser Lane Elementary School Principal Elaine Chapman Jones has resigned, citing a family emergency. In her stead, longtime Blosser Lane teacher Nancy Runberg has been appointed interim principal for the elementary school.

The appointment is a temporary appointment – until the December 16 board meeting – when trustees will consider making Runberg's appointment an official hiring for the duration of the school year.

Superintendent Patricia Johnson said Runberg has applied for the position, adding she is open to accepting applications for the position from any district employee who has an administrative credential, or is engaged in a training program to earn an administrative credential. Johnson will also be accepting applications from people working outside the Willits Unified School District.

"We are flying the position from today through next Wednesday," Johnson said. "My hope is I can bring a list of

Read the rest of **Runberg**
Over on Page 9

Croskey, Bowlds sworn in

Returning trustee Alex Bowlds and new trustee Georgeanne Croskey were sworn in as members of the Willits Unified School District Board of Trustees at the beginning of the December 2 board meeting.

Board chairwoman Cynthia Carni administered the oath of office separately to the two trustees, during which they both swore to protect and defend the constitutions of the United States and the state of California.

Croskey was appointed by the board on October 6, after a question-and-answer period in which she was judged to have outscored three other applicants for the office: former Willits Unified teacher Brian Bowles, local business consultant Christa Nunez, and community activist Richard Weinkle.

Bowlds was unopposed for his seat during the November 3 election.

In other business, the board voted to appoint Willits attorney Christopher Neary as chairman of the board for 2016. Croskey will be clerk of the board, and Superintendent

Read the rest of **Trustees**
Over on Page 9

Harris, Johnson spar at school board meeting

Trustee Laurie Harris made it abundantly clear during the December 2 school board meeting that she will be watching Willits Unified School District Superintendent Patricia Johnson very closely for the remainder of the 2015-16 school year.

During the portion of the board meeting allowing trustees to comment on things going on in the schools, Harris announced she had received an email from Willits Teachers Association President John Haschak alleging Johnson had attended a conference in Chicago, staying in an expensive hotel.

Harris asked Johnson if this was true. Johnson replied she had attended a conference in Chicago, explaining it was part of her job.

"Yes, I attended the conference. So did the counselors," Johnson said. "It didn't impact our general fund. It was directly paid for through that grant. Now the challenge we have with that grant, as you all know, is, it goes away at the

Read the rest of **Spar**
Over on Page 9



Last weekend's Roots of Motive Power annual event was a Holiday Express Success

Well over 500 people took advantage of the opportunity to hop a ride on the Roots of Motive Power Holiday Express during last Saturday afternoon's festivities. Train rides on the Roots Loop, photos with Santa Claus, coloring and cookies in the Engine House were all offered for free to the attendees of the annual event.

"It was really a fantastic turnout," said Roots of Motive Power's Michael Hammang. "We had people come from out of town, too, including some from Ukiah, Philo and

Mendocino." With multiple options for train rides – either in the caboose or the green and yellow "picnic car" – many riders took the opportunity to make a second or even third pass, switching viewpoints for each lap. Lines for each lap were long, but everyone enjoyed watching the train chug around the track and hearing the whistle blow as it passed by while they were waiting.

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



At top: Riders gathered at the loading area to catch a ride on the Holiday Express.

Above: The Holiday Express train pulls around the Roots Loop.

Below: Roots guys Troy James, Ric Martin, Peter Schlichting, Chris Baldo and Shane Grupp pose on the platform.

Photos by Maureen Moore

DA gets 16 percent raise

Mike A'Dair
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Mendocino County District Attorney David Eyster was given a 16 percent raise by the board of supervisors at the December 8 board meeting.

Discussion of the matter was taken up by supervisors

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

Fire districts file initiative to win fire funding

Dan McKee
Reporter
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Representatives of the Mendocino County Association of Fire Districts have filed a notice of intention to gather signatures to place an initiative before voters in November 2016 that would force the board of supervisors to allot 30 percent of the money the county receives under 1993's Local Public Safety

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

Willits man victim of fatal hit-and-run

A 49-year-old man was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver early Tuesday morning on Center Valley Road west of Sawyer Lane.

The dead man was identified as Donald Robert Wagner, a Willits transient, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office said.

State traffic officers report Wagner, who was wearing dark-colored clothing, was apparently walking west

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

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

Go see "Scripted" at WCT!

To the Editor:

We just got back from Willits Community Theatre's December offering, "Scripted," an ensemble of six 10-minute plays with holiday season themes. These are all original plays that were submitted to WCT by authors from around the globe, and you are not likely to see them anywhere else – a unique opportunity.

If you are not familiar with the "Scripted" concept, its purpose is to give folks who have never directed or acted a chance to experience being part of a play without the commitment of being in a full-length play, and for those who have done these things before to either hone their skills or shake off some dust.

Well, there was no dust on their performances today! These plays are directed and acted beautifully, and the originality of each play's theme made for a very entertaining production. There was the right mix of comedy and drama – just like a few of our own Christmas memories! Do yourself a favor, put on some tinsel, and take advantage of this last weekend (December 11, 12, 13). It will definitely put (or keep) you in the holiday mood!

Mary Burns and Dennis Miller, Willits

WCS Winter 2015 Fund Drive

"Together we can help"

Please help Willits Community Services to provide essential human services to our greater Willits and north Mendocino County communities. Our economy continues to make it difficult for so many people just to survive.

The availability of financial resources from outside of our community continues to diminish, and this has made it very challenging for WCS and organizations like Willits Community Services to continue to provide essential human services.

WCS has been serving the greater Willits and North County communities since 1981. For over 34 years WCS has provided a safety-net of human services that help cushion the effects of short- and long-term unemployment, poverty and crisis by providing temporary assistance programs and services to people in need.

WCS manages to provide these programs and services through a combination of funding sources, including local contributions. Especially now, the local donations of our community are the most important, because it is those dollars, more than any other resource, that keep the doors open, the lights on and the services and programs operating.

Please help us continue to serve our community by helping us reach our Winter Fund Drive financial goal of \$32,000 this winter season. Donations (checks made out to "Willits Community Services") can be mailed to WCS, 229 East San Francisco Avenue, Willits, CA 95490, or dropped off during office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from noon to 5 pm. All contributions are very much appreciated.

Your support will go a long way to help people in crisis in our community.

Unless anonymity is requested, donors to WCS's Winter 2015 Fund Drive will be published weekly in The Willits News and Willits Weekly during our appeal. Our first list of donors in the 2015 fund drive is at the bottom of this letter.

Our Main and Commercial streets "thermometer" will also display results during this time. Total campaign results will also be printed in our local newspapers when all results are in. Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Marill, executive director, WCS

Winter Fund Drive 2015

Willits Community Services and Food Bank announced Tuesday that the first group of contributors to the 2015 Winter Fund Drive has raised \$3,648.20 towards the drive's \$32,000 goal. Thank you to this week's contributors:

Rosalie Anchordoguy & Henry Shebitz

Barbara and Alex Carlon

James & Nancy Eaglin

Marge Handley

Vivian Haselswerdt

John & Lena Hofmaister

Lowell & Wilma Justus

Peter Koch

Geraldine Lassner & Kathie Havice

Riley & Jody Moore

Jean & Michael Morawski

Douglas & Kay Nord

Opal Miner Insurance Agency

William & Judith Ray

Shiloh Gateway of Worship

Nan Trichler

Anonymous

Good Will Appeal growing

To the Editor:

During November over 30 more people joined in support of courageous citizens who tried to stop the needless destruction of acres and acres of an ancient seasonal lake. For thousands of years these wetlands – what we call Little Lake Valley today – included streams and marshes, lapping waters, Coho salmon runs, spreading oaks and Oregon ash, deer and elk, wild turkeys, beavers, migratory birds, waves of wild flowers, abundant tules to thatch homes and build canoes. At least a dozen Pomo villages thrived here before the Gold Rush, supporting a population of 5,000 (about the population of Willits today) with a sustainable abundance that is truly to be admired.

The heartache of watching the merciless bulldozing of 50 acres of functioning wetlands, despite our best efforts, will not go away. The law says "no net loss of wetlands" because of their value as critical habitat, nursery spawning grounds for salmon and other interdependent species, food source and purifying kidneys of our mother earth. At least we were not silent. We won by speaking up and putting our ideals into action. Hundreds protested this illegal and immoral assault on the earth that sustains us and monumental waste of taxpayer dollars. Over 50 people were arrested.

Robin Leler, Willits

Willits Weekly's 3rd Annual Christmas Party!



Friday, December 18
from 5 to 7 pm

at Ardella's Downtown Diner

Cookie Tasting & Voting
Live Music & Merriment

Come celebrate with us!

Info: 707-459-2633 or 707-972-7047

We are still awestruck by Will Parrish's dedication to what is right. He is a thoughtful and eloquent writer, as well as a leading journalist on California water issues. You can read his work in the Anderson Valley Advertiser, as well as the East Bay Express and The Bohemian, and in publications with a larger scope such as Counterpunch and Z Magazine. When writing and speaking alone did not prevent the awful destruction – caused by more than 50,000 wick drains being inserted 80 feet deep to remove the moisture from a large portion of Little Lake Valley – Will climbed one of the stitching machines and kept it idle for more than 11 days while living about 50 feet above-ground.

Every act of conscience has its price. In Will's case, Caltrans filed a restitution claim of nearly half a million dollars. The judge ruled that a reasonable claim for restitution would be about 2 percent of the amount Caltrans originally claimed.

One of the not-so-nice outcomes is that Will is still required to pay \$9,460.45 for his courage and eloquence.

He should not face this alone.

We are implementing two ways to raise this money. Robin Leler is organizing a campaign of direct contributions to pay half the restitution. Sara Grusky is organizing a New Year's Eve dance to raise the other half.

All contributions are welcome. So far 44 people have stepped forward to contribute \$2,845, or 60 percent of our goal of \$4,730. The smallest contributions in November were \$4 and \$10. The largest two were \$250 each. Thirty more contributors in December could put us over the top.

If you would like to stand with us, you can make checks out to Will Parrish, and mail to Robin Leler at 150 East Mendocino Avenue, Willits, CA 95490. For cash donations or pledges, phone her at 459-0155. We plan to pay the restitution early in January. After January 24, any unpaid amount begins accruing 10 percent interest charges. Also in January, we will print the names of additional contributors in the newspaper (unless you request anonymity, of course).

Here's hoping you will join us publicly and/or at the New Year's Eve Dance!

November contributors are: Debra Lesslie and Doug Hundley, Sheryl Smith, Carlin and Jed Diamond, Lena and John Hofmaister, Jenny Burnstad, David West and Hugh Boone, Rosalie Anchordoguy and Henry Shebitz, For Scott Bulkye and Friends of Outlet Creek, Gina Covina, Mary Zellachild, Christopher Martin, William Ray, Karen Gridley, Robin Goldner, Steve Keyes, Anne Vander Horck, Richard Hincker, Jan Shriner, California American Indian 500-mile Spirit Runners



Across the top: Holiday decorations at the Senior Center Christmas Store, including building figurines, nutcrackers, snowmen and a beautiful Santa Claus doll. Above, from left: Driftwood planters, complete with succulents, were available at Saturday's Christmas Faire from Mark Gugliuzza of Unique Driftwood Designs. More holiday décor from the Christmas Store. Below, from left: Jody Moore and Irene Durigan of the Brooktrails Women's Club selling quilts, hats, scarves and reversible gift bags at the Faire. Christmas Store shopper Marcia Tichenor was looking for some Christmas things for her mother. "I come here every year," she said, "It's a kick." The Senior Center's Brianne Morgan, right, helps customer Vivian Haselswerdt with a See's Candy purchase. Photos by Damian Sebahouian



Senior Center Craft Faire and Christmas Store

Damian Sebahouian
Reporter
damian@willitsweekly.com

The Harrah Senior Center held its annual Christmas Craft Faire on Saturday, December 5 this year. Vendors from around the county showcased hand-crafted items from jewelry to knitted wear, handbags to hats, driftwood plant holders, and even crab traps.

Each of the vendors donated items for a raffle, the proceeds of which go towards the "Raise the Roof" fund. The cost of replacing the old leaky roof was \$104,000. As of Saturday, the Senior Center had raised about a third of that amount.

"I'm very grateful to our community," said Allyn Nonneman, Senior Center director. "The pocket change is adding up."

The senior center's annual Christmas Store, open through Monday, December 14, is also helping with fundraising, and opening day on Friday was a great success.

"We usually raise from \$5,000 to \$7,000 for the whole 10 days," said Sue Sawyer. "We made half of that yesterday."

Sawyer and Dorothy Roediger, both on the

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

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

707-459-1214 212 South Main Street, Willits, CA

12 20% OFF KAMIK & MUCK BOOTS Saturday	13 25% OFF PET TREATS & TOYS Sunday	14 30% OFF ALL CANDLES Monday	15 30% OFF ALL JEWELRY Tuesday
16 30% OFF HATS, GLOVES & SCARVES Wednesday	17 30% OFF ALL KIDS TOYS & GAMES Thursday	18 40% OFF ALL CLOTHING Friday	19 40% OFF ALL FOOTWEAR Saturday
20 30% OFF PURSES & WALLETS Sunday	21 30% OFF LODGE COOK WEAR Monday	22 30% OFF FLASHLIGHTS LIGHTERS & KNIVES Tuesday	23 30% OFF WIND CHIMES & BIRDHOUSES Wednesday

The crew at JD Redhouse is made up of family and friends. We work to provide you with a great selection of unique and functional items. Pet food and accessories, wildlife and bee supplies, toys and gifts for men, women, and children, as well as clothing & footwear for the entire family... all in one stop. And to tempt you even more, fresh deli sandwiches, handmade ice cream and fresh baked pies are just a few of the things we're serving up in our sweet shop. Make sure to have a sample of our delicious handmade fudge when you stop in, you'll be glad you did!!

The Rules: **LETTERS**

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

Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred. Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

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The rest of Christmas | From Page 3

Harrah Senior Center board of directors, are in charge of the Christmas store, which is run entirely by volunteers.

"We work all year, sorting and separating, going through all the donations that come in all year long," Sawyer said.

These high-quality items are priced low, just like what you find at the thrift store, and they're going fast. The senior center's Christmas Store – enter from the side of the Senior Center building – is scheduled to be open 9 am to 4 pm on Thursday, December 10, Friday, December 11 and Monday, December 14. On Saturday, December 12, the schedule is 10 am to 4 pm, and on Sunday, December 13, 8 am to 12 pm.

The senior center is also selling See's candies as another annual winter fundraiser: options include 1 pound boxes of various assortments of chocolate candies, mini holly assortment, lollipops, and peanut brittle.

For more information about the Harrah Senior Center, and to find out how to donate to the Raise the Roof fund, call 459-6826.

At top, across from left: Hand-crafted rolling pins. Three Santa Clauses. "Chainsaw" Roy selling his redwood carvings.

Right: A beautiful Christmas angel for sale at the Christmas Store.

Below: Christmas trees for decorating.

Photos by Damian Sebouhian



Photos by Maureen Moore

Above, left: Fred "Santa" Galten waves to the camera.

Above, right: The Sober Grad table was manned by students, including from left: Shy Silverstein, Isaac Barber, Hannah Friend, Brandon Johnson and Carlos Velarde.

At left: Excited riders ready to take a ride on the Christmas Express.

Below: Willits Children's Librarian Benjamin MacBean reads to gathered kids in one of the Mendocino County Museum's classrooms.

Bottom: Another classroom was full of stamping fun; an assortment of holiday stamps, ink pads and more was available for creative folks of all ages to make cards or other artwork.



The rest of Express | From Page 1

"We got back around 513 stubs, but Chris Baldo said he was punching tickets that had already been punched," explained Hammang. "He said he thought this was one of the best turnouts and the best Roots events!"

Inside the engine house, attendees could find Fred "Santa" Galten, Chris "Mrs. Claus" Galten, and Leo "Helper Elf" Montelongo at the Santa photo station. Santa posed for free photos – attendees could take their own photos with their camera or cell phone – and Mrs. Claus and Helper Elf readied and distributed gifts to the kids after the photos. Kids could choose from a stuffed animal or a conductor's hat, but everyone received a candy cane, too!

The coloring table in the Engine House was set up with pencils, crayons and markers artists could use to color one or several of the pre-printed holiday postcards laid out on the table. If desired, artists could leave the postcards with Roots, to stamp and mail out. Around 30 cards were mailed out from this year's event.

Sweets and savories were available inside the Engine House, too, including some at a table manned by the Willits Sober Grad student volunteers, who sold so many hot dogs, they had to run out for more food mid-event.

A wagon filled with toys was also raffled off, and the winner, a young baby named Swayze King, may have a few years to grow before enjoying the goods. However, Hammang noted that Swayze's mom, Devin King, gleefully came to pick up the wagon on Wednesday and was very excited to win. The wagon was donated by Coast Hardware and was filled with about \$250 worth of toys donated by Roots members and friends.

The Mendocino County Museum got in on the fun Saturday, too, holding their Winter Wonderland event alongside Roots' festivities. The museum offered displays of vintage toys, a rubber stamp station, readings with librarian Benjamin MacBean, and more activities for those who stopped in.



Across bottom, from left: Vintage toys, like these Barbies, at left, were displayed in the museum hall, center, as part of the Winter Wonderland event. The tray, right, held Hanukkah-themed stamps.



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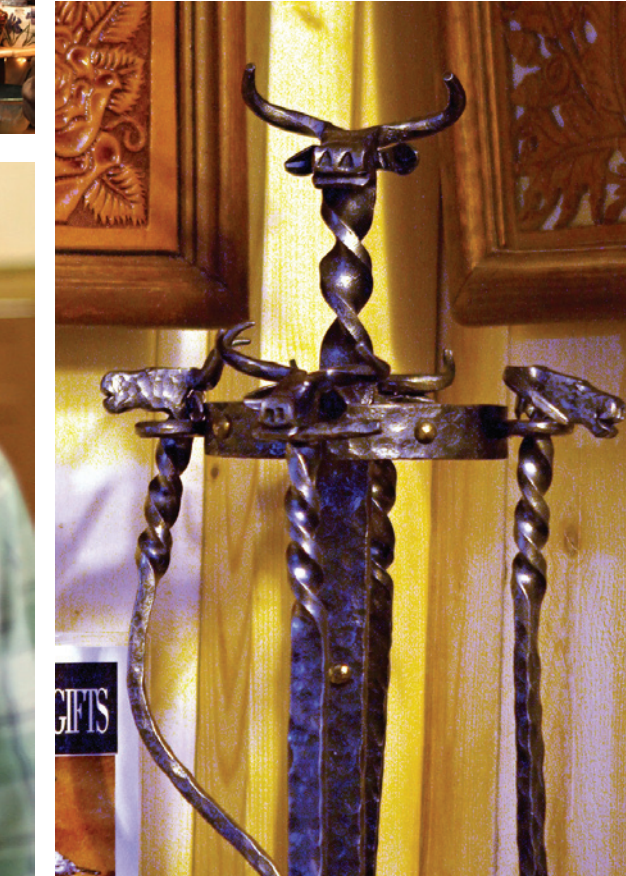
Willits Winter Farmers Market: 3 to 5:50 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Music on December 10 by the Farmers Market Band, and on December 17, by Dorian May, piano jazz. Shop for Christmas gifts or holiday meals at the last two Willits Farmers Markets of the year: Exquisite boxed chocolates, pies and baked goods by Bolliver's Fine Foods and Confections; bulk organic rice or wheat from Grange Grains; Willits-grown natural beef from John Ford Ranch; natural pork sausage, eggs and meats from Inland Ranch; Willits-grown lamb from K-Lamb; luscious soaps and lotions in gift packs or not from Arabella Soap Company; hand-cut wooden tree ornaments, puzzles and more from Picaro Gordo; organic produce and jarred specialties from Green Uprising Farm; eggs, baked goods, and jams, jellies and relishes from Fairall's Farm. Willits Weekly will be offering gift subscriptions and "I <3 Willits Weekly" T-shirts, too. Medium to XXL are just \$20 each!

Willits Holiday Craft Fair: the 29th annual Willits Holiday Craft Fair, to benefit the Willits Center for the Arts, opens today, Friday, December 11, from noon through 7 pm at the Willits Community Center, 111 East Commercial Street, and continues Saturday, December 12 from 10 am to 5 pm, and Sunday, December 13 from 10 am to 4 pm. See the fine Western-themed custom leatherwork, branding irons and blacksmith art by Mike and Mary Anne Underhill of Underhill's Western Craft; handcrafted bowls, sculptures, tables and clocks made with wood from Northern California's ancient redwood burls at the table of Greg's Redwood Burl; and the fine watercolor art cards and printed silk scarves at artist Ann Maglinte's booth. Food provided by the Willits Charter School Culinary Program. Twining Time with Anita Blu and John Wagenet, Folk/Country/Americana Roots, is set to perform today at 1 pm; Emandal Chorale will sing at 6 pm



Above: Shoppers peruse the options at last year's Holiday Craft Fair. At left: Pottery, including cups and bowls for sale. Below, left: Carlin Diamond, left, and Jacki Pealater talk about the Picaro Gordo products at the farmers market. Below, right: One of the metalworks made by Underhill Western Craft. At bottom, left: Shoppers buy goods from the Inland Market table at the winter market, held inside the Little Lake Grange. Below, right: The Arabella soap table features many pots, jars and bars of bath and body products.

Photos by Maureen Moore



Thursday, December 10

“Glitter Your World”: with Emmy Good, performing as her alter ego “The Emster.” The Glitter Party will be held Thursday, December 10 from 10:30 to 11:45 am, in the Harrah Senior Center Conference Room. “Feel free to bring any item (candles, cones, anything), or we will have stuff you can glitter or make, such as holiday cards. There is no charge. Guaranteed Good Fun! Please sign up at the front desk as space is limited, and we want to have enough materials.” Questions? Call Emmy at 367-7475.

Willits Winter Farmers Market: 3 to 5:50 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Music today by the Farmers Market Band. Shop for Christmas gifts or holiday meals: exquisite boxed chocolates, pies and baked goods by Bolliver’s Fine Foods and Confections; bulk organic rice or wheat from Grange Grains; Willits-grown natural beef from John Ford Ranch; natural pork sausage, eggs and meats from Inland Ranch; Willits-grown lamb from K-Lamb; luscious soaps and lotions in gift packs or individually from Arabella Soap Company; hand-cut wooden tree ornaments, puzzles and more from Picaro Gordo; organic produce and jarred specialties from Green Uprising Farm; eggs, baked goods, and jams, jellies and relishes from Fairall’s Farm, Willits Weekly gift subscriptions or T-shirts, and more.

WHS Booster Club Meeting: The next WHS Booster Club meeting is set for Thursday, December 10, at 6 pm at the Willits High School Food Center. Help support Willits High School athletics!

Shanachie Pub: twice-monthly Jazz Night with local musicians. Jazz standards infused with funk, hip hop, world and free-form jamming. “Fellow jazz musicians are encouraged to bring their own and partake during the second set, so long as it fits within the moment of sounds!” 8 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam’s Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Friday, December 11

Willits Holiday Craft Fair: the 29th annual Willits Holiday Craft Fair, to benefit the Willits Center for the Arts, opens today, Friday, December 11, from noon through 7 pm at the Willits Community Center, 111 East Commercial Street, and continue Saturday, December 12 from 10 am to 5 pm, and Sunday, December 13 from 10 am to 4 pm. Food provided by the Willits Charter School Culinary Program. Twining Time with Anita Blu and John Wagenet, Folk/Country/Americana Roots, is set to perform today at 1 pm; Emandal Chorale will sing at 6 pm. See article on page 12 about participants in the Kids Fair part of the event.



Fire Department Bucket Brigade Blood Drive Challenge: The Little Lake Fire Protection District plays host to the 10th annual Fire Department Bucket Brigade Blood Drive Challenge Friday, December 11 from 1 to 5 pm. The Blood Centers of the Pacific Donor Coach will be parked at the Firehouse, 74 East Commercial Street. To schedule a blood donor appointment, visit www.bloodheroes.com. Click “Locate a Blood Drive” and enter sponsor code “Willits.” For more information, please contact Kim at 707-280-2563

or kwals@bloodcenters.org. “Special thanks to all the firefighters who fought the California fires this summer!” All donors will receive a special 10th annual Bucket Brigade T-shirt!

Chamber of Commerce Mixer & Tree Lighting Ceremony: Roots of Motive Power and the Mendocino County Museum cordially invite residents to the Willits Chamber of Commerce Mixer and Tree Lighting Ceremony, Friday, December 11, at 5:30 pm. Music, fun & light refreshments. Visit the Engine Room for cookies and hot cider and hot chocolate. Special train demonstration and museum tours. “Roots plans to warm the confines of the Engine House with several activities and displays including three beautiful Silvertip fir covered with train ornaments. Mining and Smelting Heisler #1 steam locomotive will be lit up for a night time photo shoot. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad caboose #13 will be cozy with a fire in its coal stove, the model train display will be in operation, the Murray Corliss steam engine will be operating.” 400 East Commercial Street. Tree Lighting starts at 5:45 pm. Info: Willits Chamber 459-7910 or info@willits.org.

Frankie J at Caminiti’s: “Back by Popular Demand” at Caminiti’s Brooktrails Lodge, pianist Frankie J. performs Easy Listening Music & Songs from his upcoming CD. 24675 Birch Street (across from the Fire Station). Fridays in December, 5:30 to 9 pm; New Year’s Eve, 5:30 to 9:30 pm.

A Hot Winter’s Night 2015: Willits High School’s 12th annual “A Hot Winter’s Night” is set for Friday,

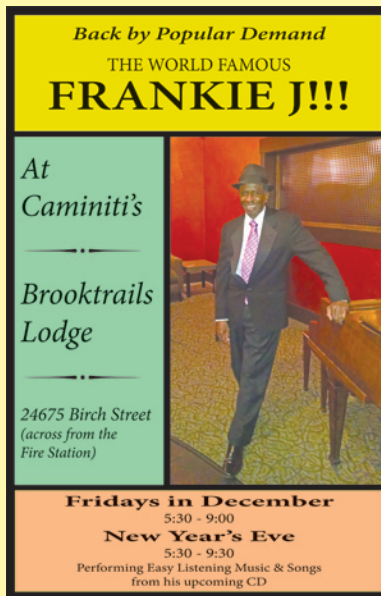
December 11 from 6 to 9 pm at Willits High School, 299 North Main Street. “Join our visual and performing artists as we celebrate the season with music (including the WHS Jazz Band & Concert Band), dance, poetry, and a visual arts exhibit, plus a sing-along with Jennifer Barrett. A small-town celebration of our youth, their creativity, imagination and joyful spirits! A Hot Winter’s Night is the WHS Visual and Performing

Arts holiday gift to our community.” The WHS Leadership Class is hosting a delicious soup dinner fundraiser from 5 to 6 pm in the Wolverine Café, aka “The Food Center,” plus free, scrumptious sweet treats during intermission. Info: Jered Sherrill at 459-7700, ext. 1536 or jeresherrill@willitsunified.com or Carolyn Bakewell at 459-7700, ext. 1533 or carolynbakewell@willitsunified.com.

“Scripted”: Willits Community Theatre presents a winter holiday version of its popular “Scripted” series. The stage production consists of six short, one-act plays centered on Christmas, family traditions and imaginary figures common to the year-end festivities. The plays are a mix of comedy, suspense, and romance and are

What's Happening Around Town

selected from more than 130 script submissions received from playwrights across the country. Plays are: “In Outsourcing Christmas” by Mary Steelsmith; “Angela’s Restaurant” by Chip Bolcik; “The True Meaning of Christmas” by Kate Danley; “Two Turtle Doves” by Hal Corley; “Joe & Eddy’s” by Jim Gordon; and “No Sound of Music” by Seth Freeman. Directors for the show include Damian Sebouhian, David Parch, and Don Samson, along with Virginia Handley, Liz Dellett and Kevin Klav. On-stage actors will include Kelly Kesey, Christopher Martin, and Bruce Andich, among many other local talents. This is the final weekend for performances of “Scripted,” set for Friday and Saturday, December 11 and 12 at 8 pm, and Sunday, December 13 at 2 pm. Advance tickets are \$10 for all shows and available in person at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street; online at brownpaperickets.com; or by phone 24/7 at 1-800-838-3006. The WCT playhouse is located at 37 West Van Lane (behind Shanachie Pub).



CloEnuf: Live classic rock’n’roll, back at the Brooktrails Lodge, 24675 Birch Street, at 8 pm “Come listen and jam with seasoned musicians who love to entertain. Sign-ups at 7:30 pm for open mic jam.

Shanachie Pub: Arkam Falls, Rock, Alternative Rock, Power Trio. 9 pm. No cover. Visit “Arkam Falls” on Facebook or www.reverbnation.com/arkamfalls. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam’s Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Diggers Dancehall Fridays: special guest DJs Toro Ranking, Willits hometown DJs appearing for the first time at Diggers Dancehall Fridays. Dancehall, Dubstep, Hip Hop, Reggae, Trance, Latin. Positive Music / Positive Vibes. Joey D. Productions. 244 South Main Street, Willits 21+ 10 pm to close. No Cover.

Saturday, December 12

Wreaths Across America: Willits American Legion Post 174 and the 4-H club will be participating in the “Wreaths Across America” ceremony honoring veterans, by putting wreaths on the veterans’ grave sites at the Willits Cemetery on Highway 20 today, Saturday, December 12, starting at 9 am. All are welcome to attend. “Wreaths Across America” is a national nonprofit organization whose mission – Remember, Honor and Teach – is carried out each year. Visit www.wreathscrossamerica.org for more info and how to get involved.



Photos with Santa: Last change to get your photo taken with Santa Claus (and the fire trucks!), by Maureen Moore of Mphotographress and Willits Weekly, \$5 for a downloadable digital photo. Today, Saturday, December 12, at the Little Lake Fire Department, 74 East Commercial Street, from

10 am to 12 pm; a 50/50 fundraiser for the fire department.

Willits Holiday Craft Fair: 10 am to 5 pm today at the Willits Community Center. See Friday, December 11 for details. George Husaruk, flutist, will perform today at noon, and Nancy New and her Just for Fun Choir are set to sing at 3:30 pm today.

“Scripted”: 8 pm at Willits Community Theatre; see Friday, December 11 listing for details.

Shanachie Pub: Self Fulfilling Prophecies, original Folk Rock Grunge. 9 pm. No cover. Visit “self fulfilling prophecies” on Facebook. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam’s Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Sunday, December 13

Willits Holiday Craft Fair: 10 am to 4 pm today at the Willits Community Center. See Friday, December 11 for details. Falco singer/guitarist is set to perform today at 1 pm; and the Nancy Smith and Janice Winters Ensemble will perform at 2 pm.

“Scripted”: Final show: 2 pm at Willits Community Theatre; see Friday, December 11 listing for details.

28th annual Willits Community Christmas Choral: Sunday, December 13 at 6 pm at the



LDS Church, 265 Margie Drive. This year’s performers are: The School of Developing Virtue Boys Orchestra; Room To Bloom Preschool; Jules Gregory; LDS Choir; Chanterelle; St. Francis Episcopal Church; Willits United Methodists Folk Ensemble; John Walczykowski and Patti Walczykowski; Michelle Snider and Gloria Urlich; Willits Brass; Ed Rinehart; Emandal Chorale; and an international ensemble. Also, a community sing-a-long during a slight intermission. “And lots of cookies and hot cider will follow the program. Please join us.” Questions?: Roni McFadden, 707-391-5461.

Monday, December 14

New Mental Health Support Group: A new support group for family and friends of individuals with mental health illness and/or addictions meets every other Monday of the United Methodist Church from noon to 1 pm. It is under the auspices of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health). The United Methodist Church is located on the corner of School and Pine St. across from the Grange. Entrance is in the back alley. All are welcome. Next meeting is December 14.

Senior Center Ice Cream Social: “Join us,

Monday, December 14, 1:30 to 2:30 pm for pie and ice cream while the ‘Just for Fun Choir’ sings some beautiful Christmas songs.” Adults \$1.50; members \$1. Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, 459-6826.

Tuesday, December 15

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre for all ages, all showings. This week’s Tightwad movies: “Love the Coopers,” “The Night Before” and “The Good Dinosaur.” For movie showtimes: www.noyotheatre.com. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6660.

Healthy Harvest Community Cooking Workshop: “Come join us at the Willits Grange kitchen on December 15 to make Apple Pie Jam and Hot Pepper Jelly. Labels and decorations will be provided to make your jars the perfect homemade holiday gift. Participants will also cook up a pot of Winter Squash and Chard Soup to sample and take home. Fee is \$20 to cover the cost of the produce. Space is limited so contact April Cunningham at acunningham@noinc.org or call 467-3212 to reserve your spot. Presented by NCO and Grown Local.



Thursday, December 17

Readings by Suzanne Wagner: Willits Weekly columnist Suzanne Wagner will give readings in Willits on Thursday, December 17, from 12 to 6 pm,

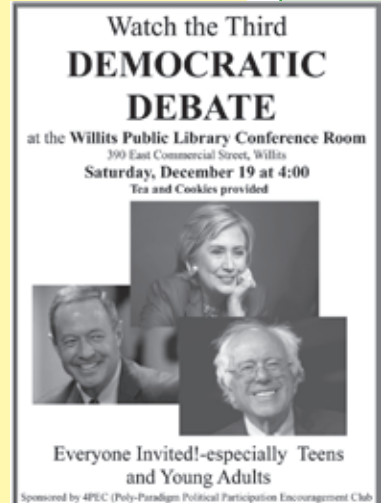
at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street, as part of the 2015 Psychic Fair. Readings will be 1/2 hour each. \$20 donation suggested. Reserve your time in advance by calling Mazahar at 459-3034 or stopping by in person.

Willits Winter Farmers Market: 3 to 5:50 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Music today by Dorian May, piano jazz. Last chance to shop for Christmas gifts or holiday meals at the last Willits Farmers Market of the year (market on holiday December 24 and December 31); exquisite boxed chocolates, pies and baked goods by Bolliver’s Fine Foods and Confections; bulk organic rice or wheat from Grange Grains; Willits-grown natural beef from John Ford Ranch; natural pork sausage, eggs and meats from Inland Ranch; Willits-grown lamb from K-Lamb; luscious soaps and lotions in gift packs or not from Arabella Soap Company; hand-cut wooden tree ornaments, puzzles and more from Picaro Gordo; organic produce and jarred specialties from Green Uprising Farm; eggs, baked goods, and jams, jellies and relishes from Fairall’s Farm, Willits Weekly gift subscriptions or T-shirts, and more.

Saturday, December 19

Watch the Democratic Debate: Watch the 3rd debate between Democratic Party candidates for President at the Willits Public Library Conference Room, 390 East Commercial Street/ Saturday, December 19 at 4 pm. Tea and cookies provided. Everyone is invited; especially teens and young adults. Sponsored by 4PEC (the Poly-Paradigm Political Participation Encouragement Club).

Shanachie Pub: Mimi Cezanne, Folk Rock. 9 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam’s Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.



Sunday, December 20

“RE-GENESIS”: a special one-woman spoken-word presentation by Felicity Artemis, in honor of the Winter Solstice on Sunday, December 20. 4 pm at the Willits Environmental Center, 630 South Main Street. Timed so those attending the annual Winter Spiral Dance at the Willits Grange, can attend this, too.

Winter Solstice Spiral Dance 2015: 21st annual celebration of the Winter Solstice, starts at 6 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. “Welcome the Sun’s return with our traditional storytelling, drumming & dancing, candle lighting and songs, followed by the Spiral Dance! The spark of Yule turns our hearts to gratitude in the cold & dark. Let us celebrate our interconnectedness and relationship to all beings, the cycles and seasons.” A benefit for the Grange. \$5 to \$10 at the door, children welcome and free. You are invited to wear a mask or costume that reminds you of a favorite wild animal or plant.

Ongoing Events

Willits Winter Farmers Market: from 3 to 5:30 pm every Thursday (except December 24 and December 31, when the market will be on vacation) at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Fall and winter produce, local meats and local grains, dinner, baked goods, gift items, chocolates, crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

“Mortals”: Willits Center for the Arts’ December show features original mixed-media artwork by Malakai Schindel. 71 East Commercial Street. Runs through December 27. Gallery hours: Thursday through Friday from 4 to 7 pm; Saturday and Sundays from 12 to 3 pm. Visit <http://willitscenterforthearts.org>.

The Emandal Chorale: ongoing rehearsals on Wednesdays, 5 to 6:30 pm, for the Chorale’s 21st season, at the Little Lake Grange great hall, 291 School Street. No auditions: Open to all who love to sing.

Inner Resources Institute: three free programs at the new Inner Resource Institute, 1500 Hearst Road (at Hearst and Valley roads in the old Grace Baptist Church building). • Morning Meditation: Every morning at 6 am. • Kirtan: Every Thursday at 7:30 pm. Devotional singing and chanting led by Chinmayan. • Sunday Morning Service: 10:30 am. Satsang and fellowship consisting of a short talk on practical spirituality; meditation; Kirtan and worship; and a prayer service in which we pray for individual, family and humanity’s needs. Info: 707-357-4676 or innerresourcesinstitute@yahoo.com.

Vintage Toy Display: Inspired by the theme, “Let’s Pretend,” Mendocino County Museum presents an exhibit of vintage toys, including dolls dating back to 1903, vintage Barbies and accessories from 1968, as well as a fully furnished Victorian-style doll house. Paper gingerbread men will be available to decorate. 400 East Commercial Street. Exhibit displayed through January. Museum hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 10 am to 4:30 pm. \$5 adults; \$1 ages 6-18; children 5 & under are free. Free first Wednesday of each month. Visit www.MendocinoMuseum.org.

The Mentoring Program: Free classes for girls in grades 6 through 10 in the Willits school system. Friday afternoons from 4 to 5 pm. Class subjects rotate: Herbs, Crafts, Yoga & Movement, Life Skills, and Cooking and Home Arts. Room 4 in the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, the Cultivate Wellness Studio. Call Michelle Cummins for info: 972-1601.

Tuesday Wii Bowling: Every Tuesday at the Harrah Senior Center Dining Room, 1501 Baechtel Road. 1:30 to 2:30 pm. Info: 459-6826.

Thursday Night Bingo: Potluck dinner and bingo every Thursday at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. 6 to 8 pm; \$5 buy-in; 50 cents per card. Info: 459-6826.

Willits Frontier Twirlers Square Dance Club: Monday night workshops at the Willits Center for the Arts, upstairs in the great room. Newer dancers from 7 to 8 pm; plus dancing from 8 to 9 pm. Lawrence Johnstone, caller. Guests always welcome! Info: Jenny Watts, 459-9526.

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

Drop-in Knitting Circle: Due to popular demand, the Willits Library is holding the drop-in knitting circle every Saturday of the month, from 3 to 4:30 pm at the Willits Branch Library, 390 East Commercial Street. “Bring your projects to share and show off! We will have expert knitters on board who can solve any problems and teach everyone to knit! Bring your own projects – we’ll supply the coffee! Sign-ups are not necessary – everyone is welcome to drop in.”

Willits Library Public Events: “Pajama Story Time” for families, Tuesdays at 7 pm. “Stories for Crawlers and Walkers,” Thursdays at 11 am. Technology group for help with hand-held devices, Fridays at 1 pm. Youth Game Night, ages 10-14, Fridays from 5 to 7:30 pm. Drop-in Knitting Circle, Saturdays from 3 to 4:30 pm. 390 East Commercial Street. More info: 459-5908.

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

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

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

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

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

Free Sheriff’s Activity League programs: at Body Works Gym, 1511 South Main Street. Teen gym: Monday to Friday from 2:30 to 5:30 pm; Boxing: Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:30 pm; Karate: Kids aged 5 to 10 from 6 to 7 pm, Tweens, Teens and Adults at 7 pm. All SAL programs free to the public. Info: www.facebook.com/MendocinoCountySheriffsYouthActivitiesLeague or Mike Tobino: 354-0565.

Shanachie Pub: World Music Mondays: Sign ups start at 7:30 pm sharp. Music starts at 8 pm. Jazz Night every second and fourth Thursday, 8 pm. No cover. “Local musicians ... take jazz standards and infuse them with funk, hip hop, world, and free form jamming. The outcome is unexplainable.” Open Mic every Wednesday, 8 pm. Sign-ups start at 7 pm. Movie Night every Tuesday, 50 South Main Street, behind Adam’s Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Karaoke Night at Al’s Redwood Room: Every Wednesday night, starting at 9 pm. 207 South Main Street. Info: 459-2444.

Laytonville Winter Farmers Market: Mondays, November to May, from 3 to 4:30 pm at Harwood Hall, 44400 Willis Avenue, Laytonville.

NEW YEAR’S EVE LISTINGS

Brazilian Carnival New Year’s Eve at the Little Lake Grange: “Pass the word: This New Year’s Eve, Thursday, December 31, come celebrate Brazilian Carnival dancing to the joyful rhythms of Samba. Get there early, because opening for Samba are Joe Craven, Pura Vida and Mystic Sol. Doors open at 6:30 pm for dinner, music starts at 8 pm. Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Festive food will be offered by the Zocalo Collective, and admission for children under 12 is just \$2 at the door. Get your tickets early because it will sell out! Tickets available @ JD Redhouse, DIG Music, Ukiah Natural Foods Co-op and Eventbrite On-line Ticketing. Happy Holidays! See you there.”

Nikos Gryo Shop will be open New Year’s Eve from 11 am until 2 am New Year’s Day, to help out downtown revelers with eating options!

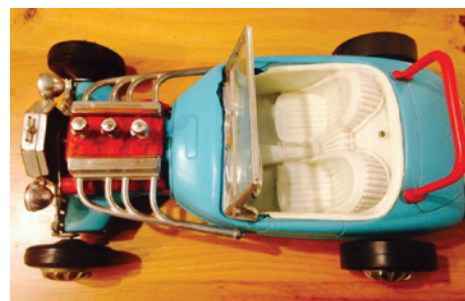
New Years Eve Zone at Digger’s: Joey D. Productions presents DJ Selecta Konnex “spinning in the New Year with dance tunes to get you grooving till next year.” Dancehall, Dubstep, Hip Hop, Reggae, Trance, Latin. Positive Music / Positive Vibes. 244 South Main Street. 21+. 10 pm to closing time. No cover.

Shanachie Pub: New Year’s Eve Bash features live music, food from Nikos Gryo Shop, chocolate from Starchild Chocolates, and champagne, all included in ticket price of \$35 per person. Advance tickets (limited to 70) available starting next week at Main Street Music & Video and Shanachie Pub.

Brooktrails Lodge: Pianist Frankie J. performs Easy Listening Music & Songs from his upcoming CD, 5:30 to 9 pm. From 9 pm to 2 am, Camp Question Mark’s New Year’s Eve, featuring Eprom, Great Dane, Huglife, Nico Luminous, Trevor Kelley, Case Manhattan and more. 21+ over. Public event. 24675 Birch Street (across from the Fire Station).

Senior Center Christmas Store

Every day through Monday, December 14
The Senior Center Christmas Store will be open every day through Monday, December 14 at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Monday-Friday, 9 am to 4 pm, Saturdays 10-4, Sunday, December 13, 8 am to 12 pm. Great prices on wonderful Christmas items; decorations, clothes, lights, gift bags, trees, and so much more.



Vintage Toy Display

Inspired by the theme, “Let’s Pretend,” Mendocino County Museum presents an exhibit of vintage toys, including dolls dating back to 1903, vintage Barbies and accessories from 1968, as well as a fully furnished Victorian-style doll house. Paper gingerbread men will be available to decorate. 400 East Commercial Street. Exhibit displayed through January. Museum hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 10 am to 4:30 pm. \$5 adults; \$1 ages 6-18; children 5 & under are free. Free first Wednesday of each month. Visit www.MendocinoMuseum.org.

Senior Center Lunch

Week of December 14 through December 18

Monday: Sole with Wild Rice

Tuesday: Tamale Pie

Wednesday: Pork Chop with Sweet Potatoes

Thursday: Hot Dog/Bun

Friday: Turkey/Gravy/Mashed Potatoes (Birth Day Lunch)

Harrah Senior Center serves lunch five days per week from 11:45 am to 1 pm. 55 and older: \$5.50 per meal; under 55 \$7 per meal. Includes soup, entrée, vegetable, bread, dessert, and drink. 1501 Baechtel Road. Info: 459-6826.

Letters to Santa

“Make sure to let Santa Claus know what you want this year! Kids are invited to write letters and drop them off at Les Schwab of Willits, 1565 South Main Street. Letters will be printed in the December 17 edition of Willits Weekly!”

Willits Charter School Culinary Program

offers lunch and goodies at Holiday Crafts Fair

The holidays are quickly approaching, and Willits Charter School is excited to provide delicious food for all of the visitors and vendors at the Willits Holiday Craft Fair. A wide variety of foods will be made available, from soups, chili, quiches and tamales, to pies, baked goods, drinks and coffee. Visitors can purchase a la carte items or a full meal.

All meal items will be prepared by our Culinary Program under the direction of culinary instructor, Ralph Mandeville. Food will be available from the beginning of the fair until the very end! Be sure to come hungry, and enjoy a delicious meal between shopping for your favorite craft items and enjoying some music at the fair.

All funds go back to our school so we can continue to provide enriching educational programs such as Music, Art, Drama, Dancing, and Culinary programs. WCS appreciates your support, and we look forward to seeing you there!

– submitted by Willits Charter School

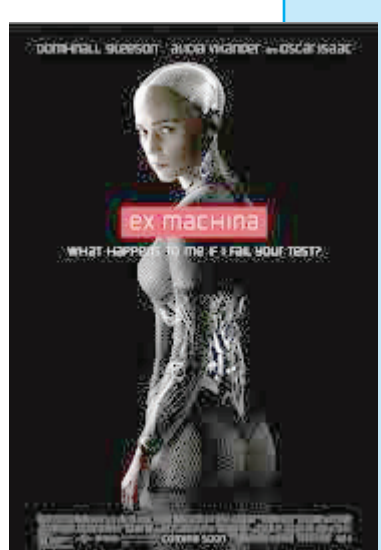
39th annual Winter Arts Faire

at the Mateel Center, Redway
Saturday, December 12 and Sunday, December 13, 10 am to 6 pm: “Celebrate the winter holidays while supporting local creative vendors, handcraft artisans, and non-profits! Tickets: \$5 at the door. Visit www.mateel.org or call 707-923-3368.

Photos with Santa

Saturday, December 12

Santa Claus and Maureen Moore of Mphotographress and Willits Weekly, will offer local kids (and pets!) of all ages one more opportunity to get your photo taken with Santa this year. \$5 for a downloadable digital photo. Saturday, December 12, get your photo taken with Santa and with fire trucks, at the Little Lake Fire Department, 74 East Commercial Street, from 10 am to 12 pm. 50/50 fundraiser for the fire department.



Christmas Bake Sale

Wednesday, December 23 8:30 am until gone
At the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. “Let us help you with your holiday baking. Buy delicious homemade goodies and help support your local senior center!”

Willits Senior Center Thrift Shop Presents The Christmas Store
Lights, ornaments, trees, clothes, gift wrap, Sees Chocolates, cards and so much more...
Fri. Dec. 4th to Mon. Dec. 14
Daily 9 am - 4 pm. Sat. 10-4
Closed Sun. Dec 6. open Sun Dec. 13
1501 Baechtel Rd. 459-6826

COLUMN | At the Movies

Best of 2015: ‘Ex Machina’

For me and my kind, the best movie of 2015 is the science fiction thriller “Ex Machina,” written and directed by Alex Garland. “Ex Machina” is a dramatized Turing Test. A feminist essay. A technology gene bonkers puzzler. A character study with twisty, devious characters. An alien invasion flick. A scary pastoral. Also, it’s Elon Musk’s and Bill Gates’ putative nightmare. And it’s slightly comedic.

A computer nerd is taken from his city day job to his boss’s remote country laboratory to interview a disturbingly feminine android. The nerd’s assignment over the course of a week is to answer the question: Is she/it conscious, or is she/it just an exceedingly clever program?

This is a life-size Turing Test. The nerd’s (Domhnall Gleeson) technical problem is complicated by the erratic and bullying behavior of his boss (Oscar Isaac), who likes to dance and have sex with his female Japanese servant (Sonoya Mizuno)...or maybe she’s some sort of slave.

And further messing with our protagonist’s head, there’s the android (Alicia Vikander) who is hauntingly beautiful. She’s a cypher with a calm and subtly beseeching feminine voice and seems to be a woman despite having a semi-transparent torso.

It’s the deftness of filmmaker Alex Garland that we the viewers are compelled to accept the nerd’s dilemmas and confusions as our own. Elon Musk is afraid of artificial intelligence; Bill Gates is quite vocal in his warnings about the creation of nonhuman intelligences. “Ex Machina” embodies this fear, but also, writer/director Garland

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Conveniently located on the corner of East Hill Road and Haehl Creek Drive.

Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital
Adventist Health

Williams, Ramming to continue to head Brooktrails board

Directors on Tuesday unanimously re-elected President Rick Williams and Vice-President Tim Ramming to head the Brooktrails Township Community Service District for another year.

The board also approved a garbage collection and curbside recycling agreement with Solid Waste of Willits that will reduce trash bills for Brooktrails residents by about 50 cents a month.

The agreement marks the first time in 15 years that garbage rates have gone down, Solid Waste's Jerry Ward told directors. Ward said the reduction was made possible by falling fuel prices.

And while water levels in Lake Emily and Lake Ida Rose "are satisfactory and stable due to diligent conservation efforts by our customers," directors renewed the township's declaration of a local emergency due to drought conditions.

"While there have been recent rain storms and [the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] has predicted strong rain events during the winter," Brooktrails General Manager Denise Rose said, "the state of California and Mendocino [County] are still in the midst of a drought," which has placed "certain restrictions upon the township's

ability to impound water flowing from Willits Creek in its reservoirs."

With water supply hovering at about 160 days, "staff remains concerned about the long-term water supply," she said.

The board agreed to keep families' water usage cap at 200 gallons per day.

To aid conservation, she said, the district's Water Division has repaired 32 known water leaks since January 2015, and has flushed 85 percent of the district's water lines to remove sedimentation and improve overall water quality.

In preparation for an expected severe El Niño year, the Wastewater Division has inspected some 1,100 linear feet of line using closed-circuit television, and jet-cleaned 10,200 linear feet of line at various locations.

Rose also reported that on November 29, a volunteer firefighter discovered "what appeared to be child floating in Lake Emily."

The child turned out to be a dummy: pants and shirt over a "body" made of plastic water bottles.

Rose called the incident "disturbing," noting firefighters could have been "injured or killed trying to save what someone thought was a joke."



The rest of Trustees | From Page 1

of Schools Patricia Johnson will continue to serve as board secretary.

Certainly a high point of the meeting was a brief but delightful performance by Sherwood School students, during which they sang the names of the elements in the periodic table. The periodic table is considered one of the most brilliant inventions of the human mind. It was first devised in

1869, when the Russian scientist Dmitri Mendeleev drew up a table of the elements based on the principle of atomic weight. In 1913-1914, English physicist H.G. Moseley, after bombarding an array of elements with X-rays, determined the periodic table would be better assembled according to atomic number. His version of the table is the one accepted today. It

contains 105 elements, each arranged into families of elements with similar properties.

Sherwood students, all wearing white lab coats with name tags on the lapels, sang their way through the table, starting with hydrogen, element number 1, and ending up at element 89, actinium. They received a rousing round of applause.



At left: School board chairwoman Cynthia Carni, left, swears in new trustee Georgeanne Croskey. Above: Sherwood School students sang about the periodic table at last week's board meeting.

The rest of Runberg | From Page 1

applicants to the board by our meeting next Wednesday."

According to Johnson, she plans to advertise for a permanent principal for Blosser Lane school next February.

Johnson said when she announced that Runberg had accepted the appointment as interim principal to the Blosser Lane staff, the staff broke into applause.

Johnson said Runberg has 20 years of teaching experience, together with some administrative experience. She has served as a temporary interim principal at Blosser Lane on two previous occasions, once under the administration of former Blosser Lane Principal Tawny

Fernandez and also during this spring, when former Blosser Lane Principal Robert Chavez was out of the district on an extended absence.

Johnson also said the district stands ready to reactivate the position of assistant principal at Blosser Lane school, should whoever is ultimately named to the position of interim principal feel he or she needs the help of an assistant principal.

Currently, the position of Blosser Lane assistant principal is unfilled. Superintendent Johnson's husband, Rocky Johnson, who had been working in that capacity, is out of the area.

The rest of Arrested | From Page 1

when the victim was about 7, according to WPD Sgt. Mark McNelly.

That investigation resulted in the issuance of an arrest warrant on charges of lewd and lascivious acts with a minor, McNelly said.

"A search warrant of his residence was subsequently served after Moynahan was taken into custody," he added.

Moynahan was later transported and booked into Mendocino County Jail. Bail was set at \$1,250,000.

In his booking mugshot, Moynahan is pictured wearing an suicide-prevention smock.

At this point, the allegations appear to be limited to a single victim, McNelly said. However anyone with additional information is urged to contact the Willits Police Department at 459-6122.

This report was based on a press release from the Willits Police Department.



Kevin Moynahan

The rest of Water | From Page 1

afternoon, after water testing revealed – as expected – no coliform bacteria or other contaminants in the water.

"We just got our second test results back," showing the absence of contaminants, City of Willits Public Works Director Rod Wilburn told Willits Weekly around 5 pm Wednesday, "and we're sending guys out right now to notify the affected parties, to tell them the notice is cancelled."

Notices were hand-delivered Monday to single-family residences on and near Walker Road, as well as to CalFire's Howard Forest station, as a routine safety precaution after a water main broke Sunday near Walker Road.

Before the broken water main was fixed Sunday night, it caused the 46,000 gallon water storage tank near Centennial Reservoir to be emptied, which meant no water when Walker Road residents turned on their taps.

"Boil Water" notices are mandated to be issued by water utilities anytime an unexpected condition – like a water line break causing loss of pressure in a public water system – causes the potential for biological contamination. The notices are issued until the water can be properly tested, just in case contaminants have gotten in.

A press release issued by the City of Willits Wednesday around 5:30 pm confirmed: "The water flowing to those customers affected by the December 6, 2015 water leak near Walker Road has been shown to be safe and clear of any contaminants." The press release emphasized: "This Boil Water Notice did not affect other customers in other parts of the city and only those customers that received a hand-delivered notice needed to follow these precautions."

Unfortunately, through a chain of events not yet entirely understood, somebody at

CalFire's Howard Station sent the "Boil Water" notice to the Willits Unified School District's administrative office, which in turn – believing it to be a notice applying to the entire City of Willits water district – sent it out to all school staff, initiated automated phone calls to all parents in the district, and made copies of the notice to send home with the students.

"By about 3 pm," said WUSD Superintendent Pat Johnson, "I'd talked to Gerry Gonzalez [Police Chief Gonzalez was acting city manager, as City Manager Adrienne Moore was out of town], and realized the notice only applied to that restricted area, and we sent out another message, apologizing, and asking everyone to disregard the previous message."

Johnson said, in future, "whenever we get an email of that nature, we will call City Hall" to make sure it's an official notice that should be distributed districtwide.

The City of Willits, around 3:30 pm Tuesday, sent out a press release emphasizing that the "Boil Water" notice was not meant for customers city-wide, but for "limited customers only," and only "to those households that actually received the [hand-delivered] notice."

A photo of the notice was posted on Facebook Tuesday morning, leading to more confusion. Because the photo cut off the right side of the notice, the sentence reading: "Due to the recent water leak in the water main along Walker Road, the water storage tank near Centennial Reservoir was completely emptied," looked as if it said: "Due to the recent water leak in the water main along Walker Road, Centennial Reservoir was completely emptied."

"How in the hell did the Centennial Reservoir empty completely without anybody noticing?" one bemused Facebook commenter asked.

The rest of Spar | From Page 1

end of the year. So we are scurrying around trying to find out how we are going to fill that gap. Let's hope we can do that in the next few months."

The grant was part of the Local Control Accountability Plan, Johnson added, and it was part of her responsibility as district superintendent to determine if the elementary school counseling program could be funded in the future.

Johnson said she and the counselors had stayed in a modestly priced hotel on the Chicago trip, but conceded she had stayed in an expensive hotel during a trip to another city because no inexpensive hotel rooms were available.

Harris also criticized Johnson for failing to respond to her December 1 email, in which she asked Johnson if it was true the superintendent had taken the trip to Chicago. Johnson explained she didn't answer her because she wanted to discuss the matter in public, at the next day's board meeting.

"I am very insulted when I don't get a response from you," Harris said.

"I am sorry to use this excuse, but I've been very busy," Johnson said. "I would welcome a phone call from you any time."

"I'd prefer my answers in writing," Harris replied. "Part of the rationale for that is, I want written documentation from you, because I don't think I am getting all the information other board members are getting."

Johnson assured Harris she was receiving the same information sent to all board members.

Harris also criticized Johnson for her handling of the move of the district office. "The furniture came in at 50 grand. I felt like that was, 'Too bad for you, board members, but I get to do what I want.'"

Trustee Alex Bowlds joined the criticism concerning the district office move. Bowlds said he was certain trustees never authorized Johnson to spend any funds, other than the \$60,000 allocated for the driveway from Blosser Lane Road to the new district office complex. Johnson spent approximately \$150,000 on the move.

"To me, it raises the question of who is in charge here," Bowlds said.

Bowlds rejected Johnson's argument that her expenditure was authorized because state and district educational policy allows the superintendent to spend up to \$50,000 without seeking board approval. Because Johnson spent under the \$50,000 limit on each individual budget category associated with the move, she argued she was within her rights.

"\$51,000 was spent," Bowlds said, referring to a line item for furniture. "The superintendent and our administration believe they have the right to unilaterally take action to spend up to \$50,000. [The] board policies we adopted, at that point in time the state had set a maximum amount of \$45,000. We have not adjusted those board policies since that point in time. So I believe our policy is in fact, only \$45,000. So despite that fact the state says it's OK – I believe the state sets that limit, I believe, as a maximum to be allowed – but again,

the state doesn't adopt our policies."

Trustee Cynthia Carni, however, defended Johnson's actions in connection with the move. "I have a completely different recollection of how that all went on. There were many lengthy meetings with lots of discussion of what everybody wanted, where we gave direction to the superintendent," Carni said. "So I find it a little disturbing that it appears she is 'coming around' or trying to slip something on us, because this very board, these very people – with one other different person sitting here – had many discussions [concerning] what we were OK with. Do we buy another place? Do we lease another place? Do we rent from another place? What's the cheapest option? Which all came down to, converting classrooms, which, personally, I didn't think was the best solution for a district office."

"But I must tell you I am finally relieved that, one: there is a district office that is on our property; two: if anybody has done any remodeling, within the last year, which I have done a lot of, I think the money spent was – really done well."

"If I could have done that to my home, it would be really amazing what more I could have done, if it was that cheap."

"The third thing is, I think it's really important the district has a professional-looking office that people come to, that parents come to, that people checking out the area [come to], and that shows ... teachers we are professional and how much they are valued."

"I think the district office is very important. And I think this board was very vocal, very instrumental, very micro-manageable, on this," Carni said. "I just want to make sure that's out there, too – that there are two sides to this."

Trustee Chris Neary declined to weigh in on the district office move. New board member Georgeanne Croskey also declined to express an opinion on the matter, since she wasn't on the board when the decision to move the district office was made.

In addition to criticizing the district office move, Harris also requested information on a decision to send buses to the Santa Rosa area to repair cracking to the bus frame.

"I'm on board with the whole 'Buy American – support American jobs,'" Harris said. "Along with, 'Let's keep our jobs in Willits, California,' because we are a socio-economically lower-end community, and I think that, being the biggest employer in the City of Willits, we need to keep our things here...."

"I would like to know how much we are spending on sending our buses outside the maintenance department here in Willits," Harris continued. "I want to know how much money we are paying the bus drivers in overtime, how much money are we paying as a district, to pay off grievances, for overtime that is given to employees without seniority. I want to know that, so I can compare it with what it would cost to hire another mechanic to help [our bus maintenance person] out."

Johnson said she would get those numbers for Harris.

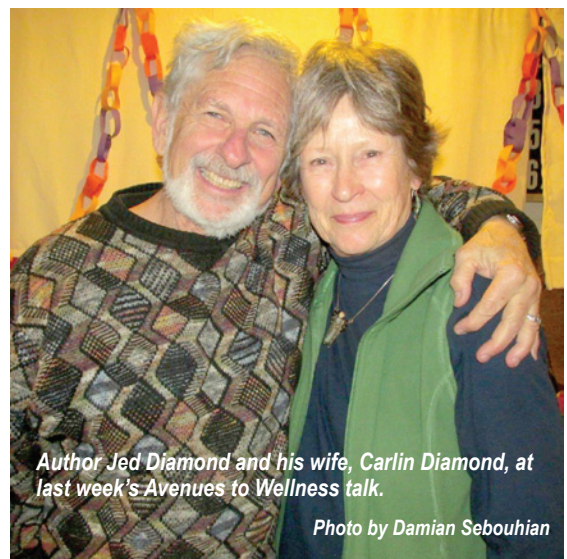
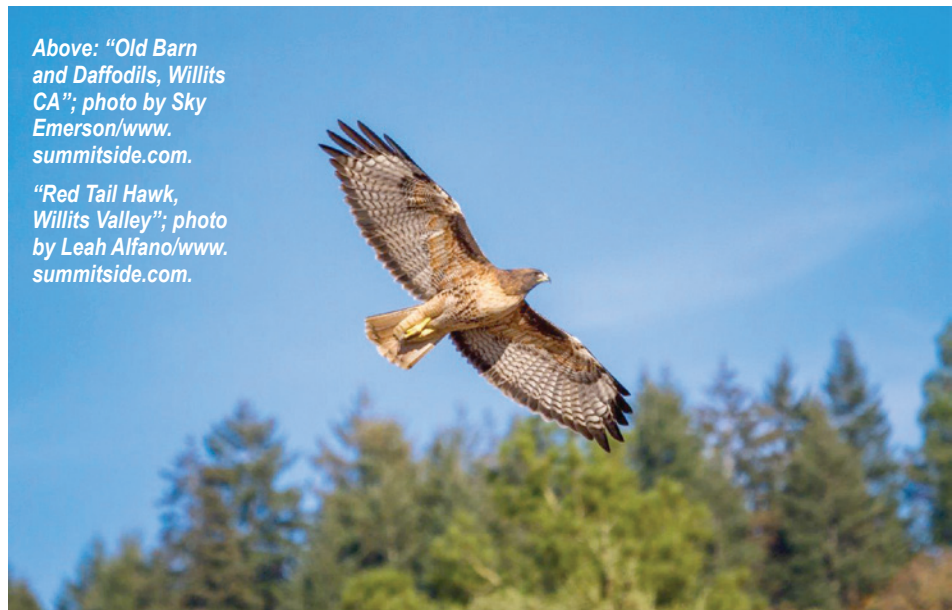


Summit Side Photo at the Holiday Crafts Fair

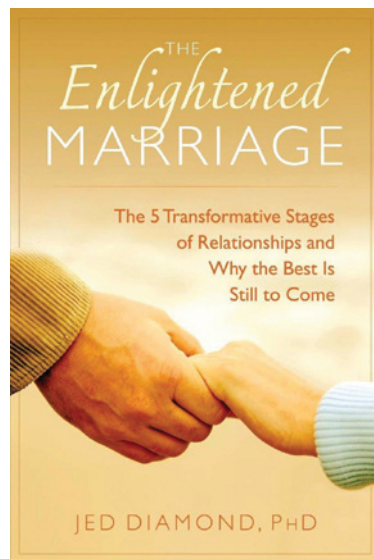
Sky Emerson and Leah Alfano collaborated to form Summit Side Photo & Video in 2010. They are driven by a passion to travel and capture the awe-inspiring beauty of their surroundings. The two have grown into a photography team with a fun and relaxed approach, specializing in fine art, portrait and sports photography. The goal of Summit Side Photo & Video is to provide clients with stunning artistic photos and preserve their precious memories in the best light possible. Summit Side Photo will be back at the Holiday Crafts Fair this year, Friday, December 11 through Sunday, December 13 at the Willits Community Center, selling their popular fine arts images.

Above: "Old Barn and Daffodils, Willits CA"; photo by Sky Emerson/www.summitside.com.

"Red Tail Hawk, Willits Valley"; photo by Leah Alfano/www.summitside.com.



Author Jed Diamond and his wife, Carlin Diamond, at last week's Avenues to Wellness talk. Photo by Damian Sebouhian



'The Enlightened Marriage'

Jed Diamond talks about the five stages of healthy relationships

When Jed Diamond – founder of MenAlive, author, psychotherapist and overall expert in the arena of men's health – discovers himself confronting a challenge to his personal or professional life, he finds that the best way to face it is to write a book.

That is what he proclaimed to the crowd gathered last Tuesday, December 1 at the Harrah Senior Center, and that is what he has done. His latest and 11th book is entitled "The Enlightened Marriage: Five Transformative Stages of Relationships and Why the Best is Still to Come."

Due to be released next summer, the book and its themes were the subject of Diamond's talk and part of a lecture series organized by the Frank R. Howard Foundation's Avenues To Wellness.

Diamond engaged the crowd with his usual wit, high energy, charm and compassion. As an observer, one gets the distinct sense that he is a man on a mission, wise, yet aware that there is always more to learn and more to share.

Earlier in his career, and before he connected with his wife, Carlin, Jed Diamond shared with the audience about how, as a psychotherapist, he was teaching others how to have healthy, long-lasting relationships, yet he himself, was struggling in that arena.

"I got divorced once, and then I thought I had it figured out, and I got divorced twice," he said. "Before I did it again, and Carlin and I got together, I thought, I have to figure this out."

The figuring-it-out is something that doesn't necessarily have an ending point, and through his experiences as a therapist and a husband and father, Diamond says, he came to realize that relationships have distinct stages. Understanding and navigating through these stages can result in a long-lasting, healthy and happy union.

"The first one is the falling-in-love stage," Diamond said. "We all know that feeling. It's that head-over-heels feeling where you obsess about the person, you can't sleep for thinking about them. They occupy your total mind for

acknowledging the group. "Avenues to Wellness is one of the best resources for health and well-being in our community," he said. "I really encourage you to find out more about it."

As part of the talk, Diamond gave away copies of one of his earlier books (published in 1988) titled "Looking For Love in All the Wrong Places." The book addresses "where we've come from in many of our relationships," Diamond said. "And I'm going to talk about where we can go."

The overall premise of "Looking for Love," Diamond explained, is about recognizing the differences between what he calls addictive love and real love. "Addictive love can be habitually getting with people who are just not right for us," he said. "It can also be almost like anorexia, where we are disconnected from others."

Diamond explained that during the first two stages, each partner has projected their own sense of themselves onto the other and, after time, the real person begins to shine through. This can be troublesome, because the veneer has been shed and we may not, initially, like the real person who has now become exposed. "It's a time to get real, and that's a wonderful thing, if we can accept it."

The second aspect of the disillusionment stage is taking the opportunity to heal old wounds, according to Diamond. "Because of all the shadows from the past, the unfinished work, all that anger and violence or whatever issues you have will somehow surface in the middle of your relationship, and you will not see your partner as they are," Diamond stressed. "In fact, 80 to 90 percent of all conflicts we have in our relationships [arise due to] shadows of the past."

Through nurturing one another, and identifying what is projection and what is real, a couple now has the opportunity to confront the shadows of the past and heal the wounds they caused.

"So in stage three, we get a chance to have all that stuff in our face. It's messy, it's difficult," Diamond said. "But on the other side of that is stage four, what I call 'real lasting love,' and you'll be able to start enjoying being with that real person," not the one your projections created.

After all the serious and difficult work of the disillusionment stage, if the couple remains together and the healing is done, there is a kind of rebirth of stage one. You fall in love all over again. "Wouldn't it be great to fall in love with your partner after being together for 35 years?" Diamond asked with a beaming smile.

Citing the work of biological anthropologist, Helen Fisher (author of many books on the subject of love and relationships), Diamond explained how it's been proven there are many older couples who still experience the in-love feeling. The experiment involved two groups of people who were plugged into brain scanners.

The first group were young couples who had just fallen in love. The second group were couples who had been married for over 20 years and who claimed to still be in love. The brain scan confirmed the older couples' claims with one exception, according to Diamond.

"The only part of the brain that didn't light up for the older couples was the part that is tuned to anxiety and fear," he said. The older couples who have reached stage four benefit from the in-love feeling, and because they know and trust each other so well, unlike with the newer couples, there's no worry about the relationship's longevity or success.

Before taking questions, Diamond ended his talk with a quote from playwright Tony Kushner. "The smallest indivisible human unit is two people. Not one. One is a fiction. From such nets of souls, societies, the social world, human life springs and also plays."

Jed Diamond will be teaching a class on enlightened marriage sometime in the spring of next year. In Diamond's words, "The class will cover the five stages of love and marriage in real depth and aims to help people who are single and want to meet the right person and begin to develop a great relationship, as well as people who are in a good relationship and want it to be great, and those whose relationships are in trouble and need help."

Diamond will host a local book signing party when "The Enlightened Marriage" is available. Visit his website, www.menalive.com for more information, or to sign up for his weekly newsletter.

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hours and hours." While the first stage is essential for a couple to become a couple to begin with, it cannot last.

"Then stage two hopefully kicks in," Diamond said, "which is where we deepen our relationship. We now have a stronger connection with that person. We deepen our bond. Maybe we have children together, we build a home together."

Originally, for Diamond, this was all there was. You fall in love, then you deepen that love, and everything else just falls into place. If the relationship fails, and the couple splits, it's because they have reached the disillusionment phase and failed to navigate through it properly.

"This is what I didn't know and what I know now and what I want you to know," Diamond said. "Disillusionment is the third stage of an enlightened marriage." In other words, it's an essential aspect along the road for a couple in order to reach the final "enlightened" phase, and it's the most challenging.

Diamond explained that during the first two stages, each partner has projected their own sense of themselves onto the other and, after time, the real person begins to shine through. This can be troublesome, because the veneer has been shed and we may not, initially, like the real person who has now become exposed. "It's a time to get real, and that's a wonderful thing, if we can accept it."

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in the eastbound lane of the roadway in cool, rainy weather at about 4:30 am when he was struck. The driver of the vehicle that hit him apparently stopped before fleeing in an unknown direction, officers say.

By the time officers arrived at the scene, paramedics had pronounced Wagner dead.

The Highway Patrol is urging anyone with any information concerning the collision to contact the Ukiah CHP office at 467-4040.

This report was based on a press release from the California Highway Patrol.

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Protection and Improvement Act (Proposition 172) to county fire agencies.

The notice was filed December 2 with County Clerk-Recorder Sue Ranochak by Tony Orth of the Brooktrails Community Services District; Dave Roderick of the Hopland Fire Protection District; Emily Strachan of the Mendocino Fire Protection District; and Michael Schaeffer of the Comptche Community Services District.

In the filing, the fire districts association argues "local fire first-responder agencies are in dire financial need" and the county "should consider the needs of local fire first-responder agencies" in its public safety services budgeting.

The county has received money from the state each year since Proposition 172 was passed. The initiative's proposed ordinance asks supervisors, "for purposes of transparency," to divulge in the county's proposed and final adopted budget which county agencies receive Proposition 172 funds, and how much. It also wants the county to "include a line item for funds to be distributed to local fire agencies."

The proposed ordinance also asks the county to pony up 30 percent of the Proposition 172 funds it receives to county fire agencies, beginning in fiscal year 2017-2018.

MCAFD asks that each of the county's 21 fire districts receive "a minimum distribution equal to two percent of the total funds allocated to local fire agencies," and the remaining funds be parceled out to the districts based on the population of each local fire agency service area "divided by the total population of the unincorporated area of" Mendocino County.

Those population figures would be determined using the "most recent data available from the state of California controller."

The proposed ordinance also calls on the board of supervisors to notify local fire agencies of any reductions or revisions to the official budget request, as well as to file public notice of any intention to reduce or revise the fire districts' budget request. The proposed ordinance also seeks to force supervisors to hold public hearings in each of the county's five supervisorial districts, "to ensure population and geographical representation," should supervisors decide to reduce or revise the amount of money fire districts will receive.

The required allocation would be "supplemental to any additional appropriation of discretionary" funds for fire protection supervisors might make. Those discretionary funds would be "identified each year in a separate budget line item, to promote transparency."

Orth told Willits Weekly the board of supervisors have formed an ad hoc committee to begin negotiations with MCAFD concerning Proposition 172 funding.

"We may not need to place the initiative before voters," he said.

In the meantime, Brooktrails General Counsel Chris Neary has been authorized to continue helping MCAFD seek county funding.

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comment during a joint meeting of supervisors and the county Library Advisory Committee on Tuesday at the county administration center in Ukiah.

The Friends of the Library, the Library Advisory Committee, and supervisors want to take the old bookmobile out of mothballs and send it to Laytonville to be used as a public library building.

Friends of the Library want to get the process moving as soon as possible, while county government has been sluggish and unorganized in addressing the issue.

Bradley said local community action to get the bookmobile to Laytonville started in July 2014. Over the intervening 16 months, the Laytonville Unified School District has offered the group a spot at the old, unused high school to park the bookmobile, as well as storage and office space.

Friends of the Long Valley Library has 178 members, and has so far raised \$8,500.

"It's been frustrating for us, because it's taken so long," said Bradley. "The financial support that [former county librarian] Wally Clark told us would be there, we want to make sure it is going to be there."

Bradley asked supervisors and county staff if the group could allow an experienced mechanic from the Mendocino County Office of Education to inspect the vehicle to determine if it can be driven to Laytonville. County staff said the county would look into the question.

Library Advisory Board President Marc Komer asked if the county was going to be responsible for moving the bookmobile to Laytonville. County staff said it would look into the question.

Komer also asked if the county could put county employees in the bookmobile. He was told the county does not yet know the answer to that question.

When Bradley asked if the county had budgeted money for financial support of the Laytonville Library, she was told the county had budgeted .25 of a full-time employee to work there, but money for utilities and

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after the board had already approved 5 percent pay increases to Auditor-Controller Lloyd Weer, Assessor-Clerk-Recorder Susan Ranochak and Treasurer-Tax Collector Shari Schampire.

The impetus to give the pay hike to the DA came from Third District Supervisor Tom Woodhouse.

"While I am proud that the county has been able to offer reasonable and sustainable increases to its employees this year, I feel some further adjustments are warranted in the case of the sheriff and district attorney," Woodhouse said. "Based on the nature of the work of the sheriff and district attorney, and the advances in public safety under their respective tenures, I am recommending salary and benefit adjustments more in line with their peers."

Woodhouse's initial proposal would have given Allman a 10 percent raise and Eyster a 22 percent raise. At the start of the day, Allman was making \$126,090 per year (\$254,817, including his benefit package), and Eyster was also earning \$126,090 a year (\$194,751 with benefits). Under Woodhouse's original proposal, the combined raises to both men would have cost the county an additional \$65,088 per year.

Allman told supervisors he thought Eyster deserved a big raise because he works long hours and because the DA and sheriff work so well together. Allman also said, while he would welcome a raise for himself, he wasn't requesting a raise, because he loves his job and he isn't doing it for the money.

Eyster told the board he is doing a great job and is paid the least of all the district attorneys in California. "Of the 22 counties in California that have populations of 100,000 or less, the district attorney position in Mendocino County is dead last. We're number 22," Eyster said.

Eyster said if he got the raise he was seeking he would raise in the ranks to number 18 out of those 22 California counties.

What Eyster did not tell supervisors Tuesday is that his assertion he was "dead last" among small county DAs needed an asterisk.

Eyster had calculated his remuneration was 22nd out of 22 small counties based on a cost per capita calculation, dividing each DA's salary and benefits package by the population of their own counties.

When compared on a dollar to dollar amount for bundled salary and benefits, Eyster ranked not 22nd, but ninth.

According to reporter Glenda Anderson, writing in the December 8 Press Democrat: "His actual salary and benefits package is higher than those of district attorneys in 13 of the 22 counties he compared."

Neither supervisors nor county staff questioned Eyster's contention that his salary

other financial support had not been budgeted.

Some part of the county's confusion on the issue may have to do with the recent departure of former County Librarian Wally Clark, who left his position November 30. Another part of the slowdown may have to do with the retirement of former Third District Supervisor John Pinches, whose hometown is Laytonville.

Another reason for the delay could be the departure of former County Counsel Douglas Losak, and his replacement in late October by Acting-County Counsel Katharine Elliott. Yet another reason for the delay could be the June 2015 departure of former General Services Agency Director Kristin McMenomy and the consolidation of her former agency with the county Executive Office.

County CEO Carmel Angelo told those attending the meeting the new county counsel was "working long and hard to get this moving," but Elliott herself said she would not be able to answer those many questions for several weeks.

"I just came on," Elliott said. "I'm catching up on quite a few items, and they all seem to be coming due in December. So I am not taking a vacation in December. I am going to be catching up, when it's quiet. So I hope to find out what I need to find out, by then."

According to Elliot, a major part of the hang-up is knowing how and whether the bookmobile would conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

When asked by Willits Weekly what exactly was the problem, Elliott, speaking like an attorney, carefully said: "I don't know yet. That's what I'm going to find out."

She added several people on the county side have been prodding the project along.

"Mr. Woodhouse has been looking in, to see how things are moving," Elliott said. "Mr. Claunch has been looking in, to the same purpose," Elliott said, referring to Jason Claunch, administrative services manager for the county library system. "And I have been looking in, as well. I do see people moving on it. These things, you know how they are. They do take time."

Woodhouse could not get a second for his initial motion. As the board discussed it, supervisors Dan Hamburg, Carre Brown and Dan Gjerde said they were uncomfortable with giving such a huge raise to Eyster, especially when the county's SEIU employees had to be satisfied with a 5 percent raise, spread over two years.

Supervisor John McCowen was very intent on keeping Eyster working for the county, and amended Woodhouse's motion to say both Allman and Eyster would get a base raise of 5 percent, like other county employees, but Allman would be given a special supplemental raise of an additional 5 percent, and Eyster would be given a supplemental 17 percent pay hike.

That motion was defeated on a 2-3 vote, with Woodhouse and McCowen voting for it, and Brown, Hamburg and Gjerde voting against it.

However, in discussing the motion, McCowen noted Gjerde had said that while he didn't like the 17 percent raise for Eyster, he would be comfortable with giving the DA a 6 percent raise.

Discussions continued, and another motion was crafted to give both men the base raise of 5 percent, plus supplementals of 5 percent for Allman and 6 percent for Eyster. The supplementals would expire automatically on January 8, 2019, when the current four-year term of office for both the sheriff and the district attorney expire.

Both men were reappointed to their offices on November 4, 2014, after nobody filed to run against them on the ballot.

McCowen said he didn't like the motion because it fell short of Eyster's bottom line of \$153,750. McCowen said he was afraid Eyster would seek employment elsewhere if he didn't get what he wanted. "I am very concerned we will lose an effective DA for a few thousand dollars," McCowen said.

McCowen noted Allman had admitted he was not particularly attached to getting a 10 percent raise, so he proposed taking Allman's 5 percent supplemental and adding it to Eyster's proposed 6 percent supplemental. That would give both men a base raise of 5 percent, while presenting Eyster with a supplemental 11 percent raise.

McCowen's motion was approved unanimously.

According to Assistant County Executive Officer Alan Flora, as a result of the vote, Allman will make \$132,394 annually (\$257,281 with benefits) and Eyster will make \$146,264 annually (\$224,962 with benefits).

The new salary schedule will take effect December 20.

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Read the rest of Marriage | Over on Page 11

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'School-made' Christmas gifts

Baechtel Grove kids get ready for Holiday Craft Fair

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At top, from left: Working on packaging jars of Snickerdoodle Cookie mix is a fun reward for finishing classroom assignments. Aimee Pitre's class will have these jars of cookie mix packaged for gift-giving at the Holiday Craft Fair. Supplies for the projects are purchased with proceeds of the previous year's sales at the craft fair.

Above, left: Betty Meinecke helps her student decide on the perfect decorations.

Above, right: Aimee Pitre and her students put the final touches on the Snickerdoodle Cookie mix.

Photos by Jenny Senter

Two dedicated Baechtel Grove Middle School teachers and a group of talented students have been working hard these past weeks to create items to sell at the Kids Craft Fair at the 29th annual Willits Holiday Craft Fair – on Saturday, December 12 only – at the Willits Community Center. Many locals have come to rely on the tradition each year of buying the Baechtel Grove kids' gift tags, cards, and gift items to round out their Christmas list.

Betty Meinecke and Aimee Pitre both worked as teacher assistants before getting their teaching credentials. Meinecke, who has taught at Baechtel Grove Middle School for 30 years, came north to Willits from Lancaster, California. Pitre headed

south from Bayside, near Arcata in Humboldt County, and has taught for six years. Together they coordinate the student workshops that create the crafts that are on sale each year at the Holiday Craft Fair.

Don't tell the students, but they are learning valuable skills along the way! Schoolwork has to be up-to-date before the students can work on their projects. According to both Meinecke and Pitre, the skills the students learn as they explore creativity and hone their talents are self-advocacy, how to take direction from a supervisor, occupation exploration, and time management.

Some of the students will help out at the Holiday Fair, which enhances their knowledge of customer service, sales, and math by making change for customers.

Proceeds from the Holiday Fair sales, which the kids count together in the classroom, are a fun way to teach students the value of working hard towards a goal. The program, started years ago with a grant written by retired teacher Jeanne King, does not replace classroom learning, but as studies have shown, this kind of activity enhances student learning.

Proceeds from the Holiday Craft Fair go back into the business to purchase craft supplies and disposable cameras for the class. Meinecke shared that the class then takes a field trip in the spring, often to Mendocino Botanical Gardens in Fort Bragg, where the students take pictures with their cameras.

Those photos will then be developed and used to create greeting cards to sell at the following year's Holiday Craft Fair. Often there will be enough money left to have a small party at the end of the year, where the students discuss the results of their "business year" and plan projects for the following school year.

"Seeing students blossom into artists and watching them find another aspect of themselves," Meinecke said, is the prime reward for these lucky students' teachers.

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Last Chance for Santa Photos

Santa Claus will be making one last stop in Willits this weekend; he will arrive at 10 am at the Little Lake Fire Department station on the corner of Commercial and Humboldt streets on Saturday, December 12. Photos with Santa (and the fire trucks!) will be available from 10 am to noon, and digital downloads cost only \$5 each. This, like the previous three Santa photo sessions last weekend, will be held as a fundraiser for a local group: Half of the proceeds raised this Saturday will go to benefit the Little Lake Fire Department. Check next week's Willits Weekly for donation totals and more cute photos! No appointment needed, just come by!



Photos by Maureen Moore



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'Tis the season to give and enjoy all that life has to offer – family, friends, love and peace. While you enjoy all of the festivities, don't forget to think about your health. So this year, try to add some heart-healthy foods to your shopping list, work in some time to exercise and take care of yourself.

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Ready to Wrap!

Willits Christmas Kids Program seeks wrappers – and returned tags!

Red and green tags, attached to bags of overflowing toys, clothes and more, are slowly being returned to a delighted Sandy Turner who has already turned the inside of the old Rexall building into the well-oiled machine of years past, ensuring kids get to enjoy gifts Christmas morning.

Each child and family who is a part of the Willits Christmas Kids Program fills out a specific tag outlining wants and needs for the coming year. The tags are then distributed on the trees seen inside businesses and at other locations around town. Community members can pick up a tag, fill one or all of the items, and return the unwrapped goods to the Rexall building, or any of the drop-off locations, so they can be tallied, wrapped and bagged before delivery Christmas Eve.

Currently, Turner estimates about 350 kids are going to benefit from this year's program, but she notes that more tags keep coming in as family, teachers and officials sign up additional kids, or whole families.

This year, 15 individuals sponsored entire families. Turner noted how much she appreciated those who were able to sponsor families, creating an easy and complete sack ready for Santa, all in one swoop.

"All the tags we have currently are out on trees," explained Turner, "but we keep receiving calls that businesses are running out of tags. I think I've refilled Safeway's tree three times, and the tree at Howard Memorial Hospital started with 40 tags, and we just put 30 more on! But please keep checking back, we will add more as soon as we get them."

Turner also stressed the importance of returning the tags as soon as possible, with one, two or all the items included in an attached bag. And, if it just looks like it's

not going to be possible to fill the tag, or if there is any other problem, come in and drop the tag back off, and it can get hung back up on a tree without issue.

There is another option if you're interested in helping fill the tags, but keep finding trees empty of tags: cash donations. Turner expressed a huge emphasis on the benefit of the cash donations, which allow the group to go out and purchase items at the eleventh hour to ensure all tags are filled.

"There have been so many generous people who have already donated cash, which really helps us in the final days," explained Turner. "Two or three days ago, one individual came in with a \$1,000 check. The Willits Junior Horsemen did a fundraiser for us and earned \$400 that they used to shop for tags. They chose baby items and things for big kids, too. The Teachers Association has given us a \$150 check, and we've received several \$100 checks, but it still leaves us short for what we will need towards the end."

If donating or shopping isn't something that is in your budget, but you still want to help out with the program, each and every present will need to be wrapped before the program's December 22 deadline/goal. Everything needed is at the shop: paper, scissors, tape, tags – the crew just needs extra hands to do the work.

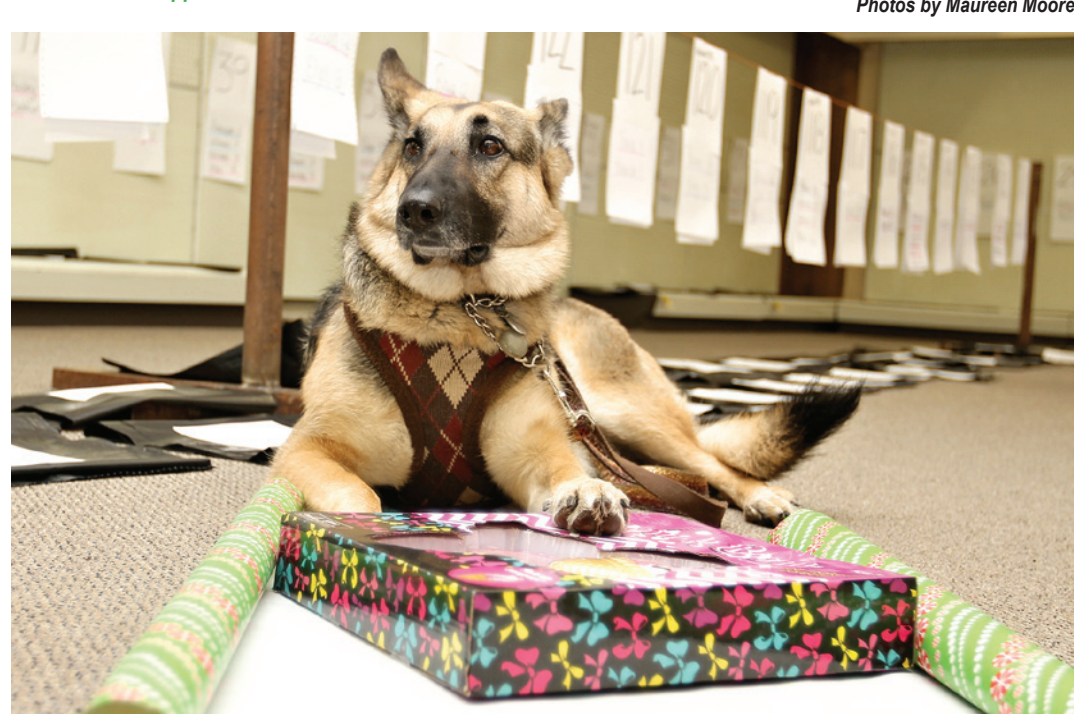
Starting on Saturday, December 12, the old Rexall building will be open late in the evening and manned throughout the day (with the exception of a closed day on December 15), so that whenever a community member has a chance to stop in and help wrap, there will be a spot ready!

For more information, stop by the shop located on the corner of Main Street and West Mendocino Avenue, or call Turner directly at 490-8872.

Across the top: Community members stopped by to help wrap some of the hundreds of presents to be distributed this year. The old Rexall building has transformed into the carefully organized "bag, wrap and tag" center needed to complete the process of getting the right gifts to the right kids again this year.



Above: Wrappers who came by to lend a hand, including, from left: Evelyn Fisher of Nikos Gyro Shop, Kaylyn Kyle of the Goods Shoppe, Vivianna, held by Breanna Lopes, Sandy Turner and Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman. Below: Roxie the German shepherd ponders the difficulties of wrapping presents without the convenience of opposable thumbs.



Photos by Maureen Moore



The tree at Healing Central Chiropractic.



The tree at Willits Safeway.

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The tree at Howard Memorial Hospital.



At left: A nighttime photo taken at the 100-year birthday of the Mason County Logging #7 locomotive in 2010. With the correct lighting, the locomotive makes for some great photos. Roots plans to light up the Bluestone Mining and Smelting Heisler in similar fashion on Friday evening.

Photo by Bruce Evans

Above: The Roots of Motive Power's Christmas Express. Below: Fred "Santa" Galten poses on the tracks during Saturday's event.

Photos by Chris Baldo



Willits Chamber of Commerce Mixer

Friday, December 11

Hosted by Roots of Motive Power and the Mendocino County Museum

Roots volunteers who helped usher in the Christmas season last Saturday, with the annual Holiday Express Santa Train, will be joining with the Mendocino County Museum to host the Willits Chamber of Commerce Mixer on Friday evening from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Commercial Street will be the focus of this year's event, with a Christmas Tree Lighting in the redwood grove in front of the museum, with special museum activities inside, and Roots of Motive Power displays in the Engine House.

Roots plans to warm the confines of the Engine House with several activities and displays, including three beautiful Silvertip firs covered with train ornaments. Mining and Smelting Heisler #1 steam locomotive will be lit up for a night-time photo shoot. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad caboose #13 will be cozy with a fire in its coal stove, the model train display will be in operation, and the Murray Corliss steam engine will be operating.

Snacks will be available, along with hot cider and hot chocolate. The public is welcome to attend the mixer, enjoy in the seasonal festivities, and meet many of the merchants that support the community.

— Chris Baldo, for Roots of Motive Power

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STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS
SPECIAL PREVIEW - Thurs., Dec. 17th

LOVE THE COOPERS

(PG) 13
1 hr 47 mins

— 6 DAYS ONLY —
Fri: 5:30 & 8:00pm
Sat/Sun: 12:30, 3:00, 5:30 & 8:00pm
Mon-Wed: 4:30 & 7:00pm

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(R) 1 hr 41 mins
— 6 DAYS ONLY —
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Sat/Sun: 1:00, 3:45, 6:00 & 8:15pm
Mon-Wed: 5:00 & 7:15pm

THE GOOD DINOSAUR

(PG) 1 hr 40 mins

Fri: 5:15 & 7:30pm
Sat/Sun: 12:45, 3:00, 5:15 & 7:30pm
Mon-Thurs: 4:15 & 6:30pm

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS

SPECIAL PREVIEW THURS., DEC. 17th
(PG) 13 2 hrs 16 mins

Thurs: 3D SHOWS at 7:00 & 10:00pm
Thurs: 2D SHOWS at 7:30 & 10:30pm

Advanced tickets on sale at the Box Office!

This Week's Tightwad Tuesday Titles are in RED - All tickets: \$5



Sweets for the Sweet

Sober Grad Committee holds fundraising holiday candy sales

The Sober Grad Committee is holding holiday candy sales to raise funds for the graduation night dinner next year. Manning the table Saturday at the Senior Center Crafts Fair were, from left, Blake Leslie, WPD Chief Gerry Gonzalez, Kari Rescina and Nick Rescina. Garrett Vincent, left, and Sky Silverstein, work the well-filled Sober Grad table at the Laytonville Craft Fair on Saturday, too.

The last chance this Christmas season to get delicious homemade candy while supporting Sober Grad is coming up this Saturday, December 12, from 10 am to 2 pm at the Holiday Craft Fair at the Willits Community Center.



Furry Friends Hoping for a Home

Sweet Cheyenne

Sweet Cheyenne is a 5-year-old spayed female mixed-breed dog who currently weighs 38 pounds. She is very affectionate. Her size and temperament make her the perfect companion! She is happiest cuddled up next to you on the couch, and would love a home where she is part of a family and (hopefully) allowed on the sofa! This gentle soul will be a wonderful addition to any loving home, including one with kids or other pets.

The Ukiah Animal Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, and our adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Wednesday from 10 am to 6 pm. We have many wonderful dogs and cats, awaiting their forever homes here. To view photos and bios of more of our wonderful adoptable animals, please visit our website: www.mendoshelterpets.com or visit our shelter during shelter hours. More info about adoptions: 467-6453.



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OBITUARY | Dorothy Sanders

Dorothy M. Sanders was born on March 4, 1930 to Fred C. and Lana M. Savage in Klamath Falls, Oregon. After spending a special Thanksgiving holiday with as many family members as were able to attend, she passed away on December 3, 2015 at her home in Willits.

Dorothy grew up in Klamath Falls and Grants Pass, Oregon. In 1946, she met the man of her dreams, George B. Sanders, and they were married in Klamath Falls on March 29, 1947. They were devoted to each other, their family, and celebrated 60 years of marriage prior to his death in November 2007.

They enjoyed visiting the Hawaiian Islands, strolling on the beaches, searching for sea shells, watching the waves, and just being with each other. They loved to travel in the United States, visiting family and also reconnecting with friends from George's days in the U.S. Army.

Some of Dorothy's hobbies were gardening, crocheting, sewing and stained glass work, as well as spending time with family and friends. She also belonged to the Red Hat Society and took part in their functions whenever she was able.

Dorothy loved to read, and she worked for the Willits Library for 17 years, retiring in 1992. She truly enjoyed her job and helping the young people who came to the library. She tried to help instill a joy of reading in those young people.

She is preceded in death by her parents, her husband, George B. Sanders Sr., and her son, Gary L. Sanders.

She is survived by her daughter, Lynne M. Lesley (Ron), Veneta, Oregon; daughter, Kathy Nash (Roger), Redding; and son, George (Jody) B. Sanders, Jr. (Linda), Rohnert Park; granddaughter, Teresa Glavin; grandson, Jason Wonacott; granddaughter, Amber Sturtevant; granddaughter, Shari Abney; granddaughter, Lisa Murray; grandson, Jeff Nash; grandson, Tyler Sanders; grandson, Joshua Sanders; grandson, Ryan Sanders and grandson, Travis Sanders, as well as numerous great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. She also leaves her Yorkie, Wiggle, who has kept her company for the past four years!

Mom, love you forever and always – your children, Lynne, Kathy and Jody.

Arrangements under the care and direction of Anker-Lucier Mortuary.

Letters to Santa

Make sure to let him know what you want this year! Bring to Les Schwab of Willits by December 14!

Dear Santa:

Love:

Age:

Letters will be printed in the 12/17 edition of Willits Weekly

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Volunteer Opportunities
The Willits Senior Center has many areas where your expertise and talents are needed. Front Desk, Thrift Store, Dining Room, Sunday Bingo, Sunday Breakfast, Special Dinners, Landscaping, Garden, Firewood. Come join our Team, Call Mariya at 707-459-6826.

Help Wanted
Now Hiring: Circuit Coach at Curves in Willits. Part-time, Tuesday-Friday, 5 pm-7 pm. 8 hours per week. Come and pick up an application.

Volunteers Wanted
Frank Howard Memorial Hospital is looking for positive members of the community to volunteer in various departments of the hospital. Hours: flexible and can include weekends. More info? Call 456-3245.

Help Wanted
Wanted full time vet assistant. Experience is a plus. Good people and phone skills, bring resume to Willits Animal Hospital. Position available now.

Wanted: Brown Paper Bags with Handles
For the Willits Senior Center's Meals On Wheels and Meal Carry-Out Program. Call Mariya at 459-6826 or bring to 1501 Baechtel Road.

Help Wanted
Adventist Health-Homocare & Hospice Services Mendocino County. FT - P/T - Per Diem positions: RN, Home Health Aide, Physical & Occupational Therapist. Great Team & Great Benefits. Call Trudy-H/R #456-3230.

Place your ad here next week!

Just \$10 for 30 words for 2 weeks!

Housing Wanted
Hi, I'm desperately seeking shelter. I work fulltime in Willits. I have great personal and rental references. I'm relocating from Hopland due to my rental selling. I have a small dog and a normal size dog. I need anything with a fenced-in yard. Please call or e-mail: Sabrina 707-349-4876 or seabreezest@gmail.com.

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WPD Activity Report

November 29 to December 5
Prepared by WPD Sgt. Jake Donahue

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled 170 incidents this week.

During this seven-day reporting period, Willits Police officers were assigned 15 criminal investigation reports, made 10 arrests, issued 6 traffic citations, and investigated 3 traffic collisions.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

Sunday, November 29
9 am: Reported burglary to a residence in the 200 block of East Valley Street.
5 pm: VASQUEZ, Michael, 33, Covelo – arrested for DUI.

Monday, November 30
9 am: BENZINGER, Robert, 68, New York, NY – arrested pursuant to 537(a) PC (defrauding an innkeeper) after refusing to pay his restaurant bill.
12:30 pm: Investigation of an alleged assault in the 300 block of Boscabelle Avenue.
7 pm: HILL, Justin, 46, Fort Bragg – arrested pursuant to an active Mendocino County warrant.

Wednesday, December 2
12 pm: WPD officers arrested Kevin Moynahan at his residence pursuant to an active warrant following an allegation that he'd repeatedly sexually abused a female victim beginning when the victim was about 7 years old. The arrest followed an extensive investigation by the Willits Police Department into the allegation, with assistance provided by the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office.
Suspect: MOYNAHAN, Kevin, 51, Willits
Charges: 288(a) PC – Lewd/Lascivious Acts with Child Under 14
1203.066(A)(8) – Sexual Conduct with Victim Under 14
5 pm: Hit and run collision in the 100 block of West Mendocino Avenue.

Thursday, December 3
3 am: Domestic dispute in the 200 block of South Lenore Avenue.
9 pm: ANDERSON, Daniel, 36, Willits – cited on active Mendocino County arrest warrant.

Friday, December 4
1 pm: Hit and run collision in the 800 block of South Main Street.
6 pm: NIETO, Ramon, 45, Willits – cited for an outstanding Mendocino County warrant.

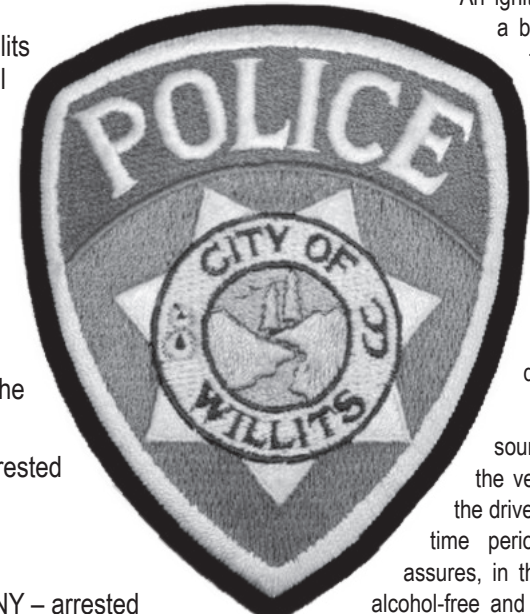
7 pm: REMOLIF, Jerry, 78, Willits – arrested for DUI in the 200 block of South Main Street.

COLUMN | Linda on the Law

The ignition interlock device and you

Linda McNeil
Columnist

After reading this column headline, you might be asking, "What is an ignition interlock device, and how does it affect me?"



An ignition interlock device (IID) is a breath-alcohol testing device that connects to the ignition system of a vehicle. In theory, if alcohol is present in the driver's breath sample, then the vehicle will not start, and the person is required to have the vehicle towed to the nearest IID station before another attempt is made to drive it.

The IID also emits a beeping sound at irregular times while the vehicle is in motion, requiring the driver to pull over within a certain time period and blow again. This assures, in theory, that the driver is still alcohol-free and is the person who actually blew into the device originally.

If the "rolling breath tests" record alcohol on board, then the vehicle will emit a very loud noise until the ignition is turned off. Again, the person must have the vehicle towed to the nearest IID station.

Right now lobbyists all over the country are working for the passage of laws requiring car makers to install an IID in all new vehicles. This means a zero tolerance law. At the present time, zero tolerance only applies to some people who are on probation for DUI or who are under 21 years of age.

Zero tolerance means no wine with dinner or beer before driving home, even if you are within the present legal limit of 0.08 percent. If a federal law is passed, then IIDs, like seatbelts and motorcycle helmets, would likely be tied to federal highway money. This means unless a state passes the IID law, that state does not receive certain federal funds for infrastructure.

In the best of all possible worlds, an IID is a logical idea. In theory, it would prevent drinking and driving, and would keep our roads safe. IIDs would also give people an opportunity to keep their jobs and licenses if they install an IID.

Unfortunately there are many problems with IID devices that have still not been addressed. Because of these problems, IIDs are not reliable and, therefore, violate our constitutional right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures.

Breath-testing devices were first developed in 1931 with the "drunkometer"; in 1954 there was the "breathalyzer"; and in 1967, we saw the first electronic breath machine. In the last 25 years, three different machines have been used for the "official" breath tests in Mendocino County, with a myriad of other devices for the pre-arrest investigative and voluntary breath test.

But in the last 80-plus years of development, we still find basic problems. For example, present breath-testing devices do not take into account the differences in the composition of human breath, breath temperature, breath air/liquid ratio, breath volume, carbohydrate consumption, or the use of breath sprays, mouthwash, mints, chocolate, cinnamon, and other foods, nor do they consider the state of the driver's gum and teeth, the driver's general health, the qualifications of the person checking the machine regularly for accuracy who calibrates the equipment, or a myriad of other issues.

Ignition interlock devices have problems that are built into their design. If IIDs become mandatory, and if the problems are not addressed, many law-abiding drivers will be stranded and their pocketbooks pinched. IIDs also pose problems for those in our community on DUI probation who sometimes decide not to drive instead of installing a problematic system. This may cause economic hardship. IIDs are a positive idea, but need to be independently researched.

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

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Above, from left: Passport drawing winner Candy Thorpe, right, laughs with the Willits Chamber's Lynn Kennelly as she receives her gift basket.

Grand Prize basket winner Shirl Campbell, left, with Lynn Kennelly, outside Earth's Treasures.

Sheriff Tom Allman and Lynn Kennelly share a heartfelt Christmas joke laugh inside the Willits Chamber office.

At left: Completed passports with stamps from local businesses.

Photos by Jennifer Poole

Shop Local for the Holidays

Three winners of Small Business Saturday's gift baskets

Three Small Business Saturday shoppers in Willits won gift baskets filled with items from all participating local stores. Willits Chamber of Commerce's Lynn Kennelly presented beautiful gift baskets Friday to grand prize winner Shirl Campbell and runners-up Candy Thorpe and Sheriff Tom Allman.

All three winners were happy about their win – and their local shopping! "I was able to get two good Christmas presents downtown for my wife," Allman said, "and I got my passport all filled out at Mendo Mill."

The sheriff's gift basket included gift certificates, a photo book album, a hand-poured candle, a doggie treat bag, a hat, kids books, a princess doll, a redwood tote bag, a bar of hemp soap, and more.

Small Business Saturday is sponsored by American Express, which offers tote bags, signage and the passport forms and graphics, too: Shoppers can get a stamp at each local business where they make a purchase, making them eligible to win the gift baskets. Annette Pinon of Flowers by Annette put the beautiful baskets together.

Shirl Campbell and her 16-year-old daughter Ryann shopped together last weekend. Small Business Saturday is "a great idea," Campbell said. "We found great stuff to buy around the community this year. We had fun going in to all the little shops – and we did some 'future' shopping, too." They started out at Earth's Treasures, where Campbell works and where Ryann had a gift certificate to spend.

Campbell's basket had several gift certificates, a stuffed hedgehog and a reindeer, a "Mendo" cap, and a scarf, among other goodies.

Candy Thorpe said she tried "other places" than she usually shops, thanks to the Small Business Saturday promotion, shopping for gifts, "or for me," she laughed. She went into Mazahar to buy nine tickets for "Scripted,"

the seasonal evening of short holiday plays at the Willits Community Theatre right now. Thorpe has been convinced about the benefits of supporting local businesses for a long time: She was an "ambassador" for the Willits Chamber for many years. "It was fun," she said. She told a funny Christmas joke, and then ran off to catch the first day of the Christmas Store at the senior center to do more shopping for gifts, "or for me," she repeated, laughing.

Thorpe's basket included a number of gift certificates, too, a Dr. Who toy, candles and socks, games, a stocking hat, and a Savings Bank umbrella.

"We do have a lot of variety of shopping here that a lot of people don't realize," the Chamber's Kennelly said.

The next Willits Chamber event is a new one: a Chamber Mixer and Tree Lighting Ceremony in the redwood grove in front of the Mendocino County Museum, 400 East Commercial Street, hosted by Roots of Motive Power and the museum on Friday, December 11. The event starts at 5:30 pm with music, fun and light refreshments, and the Tree Lighting Ceremony begins at 5:45 pm.

Roots "plans to warm the confines of the Engine House with several activities and displays, including three beautiful silvertip firs covered with train ornaments. Mining and Smelting Heisler #1 steam locomotive will be lit up for a night-time photo shoot. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad caboose #13 will be cozy with a fire in its coal stove, the model train display will be in operation, and the Murray Corliss steam engine will be operating."

Light refreshments will be available, along with hot cider and hot chocolate. The public is welcome to attend the Chamber Mixer, enjoy the seasonal festivities, and meet many of the merchants that support the community. Info: Willits Chamber 459-7910 or info@willits.org.

– Jennifer Poole

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